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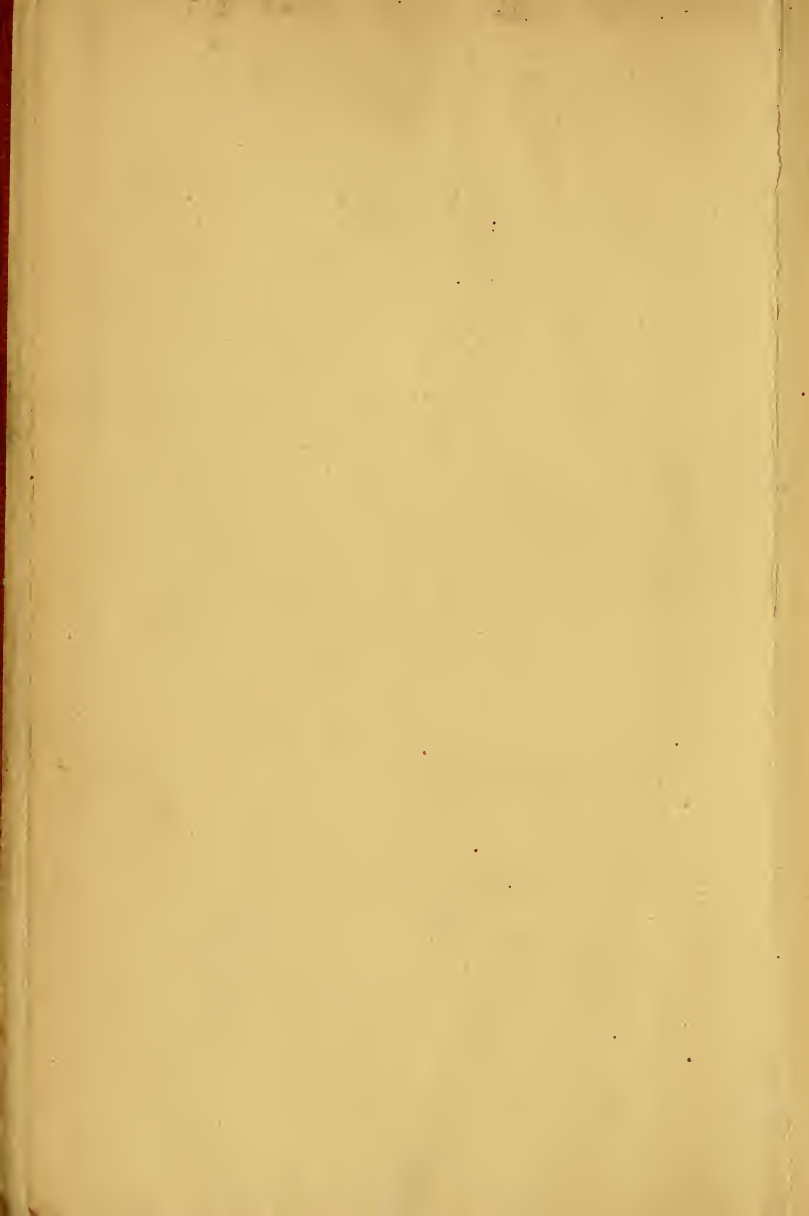


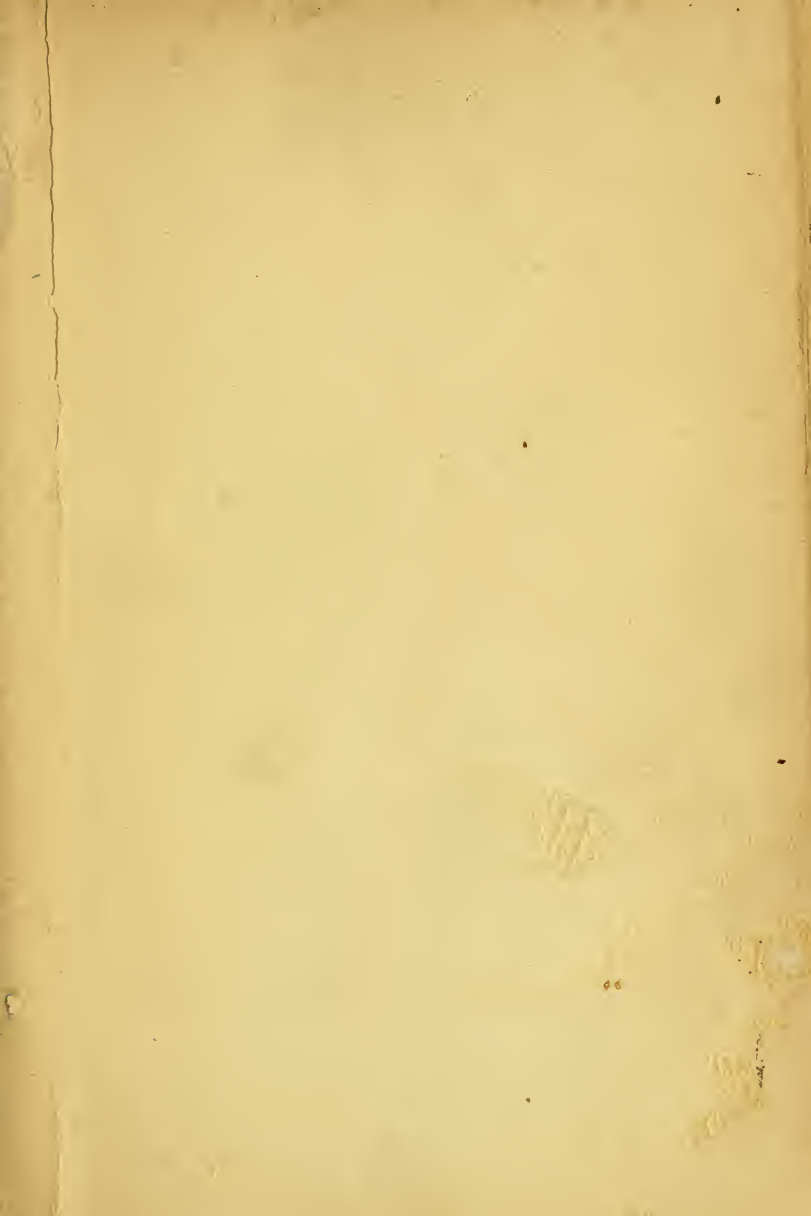
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THEY SAILED SLOWLY TOWARD HER ON THE TOMATO-CAN.

IN NO-MAN'S LAND

1796-22

A WONDER STORY

ms



BY

E. S. BROOKS

6207-30

With seventy-two drawings by F. Childe Hassam

BOSTON
D. LOTHROP AND COMPANY
FRANKLIN AND HAWLEY STREETS

[1885]

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IN NO-MAN'S LAND.

CHAPTER I.

THE JUMPING-OFF PLACE.

SLOWLY the horse-car toiled up the sunny street. The day was hot, and so were the horses. So, too, were the drowsy conductor on the rear platform, and the perspiring driver in front, while within the car, cuddled all up in a little heap, rode the only passenger — just one hot, tired, sleepy little girl — Ruthie.

Her day of play at Mollie's house, together with the heat and the slow, droning motion of the horse-car, made her nid-nid-nod, almost keeping time with the dancing squirrel opposite her as, in one of the advertising panels of the car, he bobbed up with every jolt, and thus called the attention of passengers to the unrivalled virtues of Mr. Some-

she was startled by seeing the squirrel leap out of his panel and stretch himself at full length on the seat beside her.

"There," he said, laying his head in her lap, "this is comfort. Thank fortune, my work is over!"

"Why, why!" said Ruthie, greatly astonished, "I thought you were only a pasteboard squirrel."

"Pasteboard indeed!" exclaimed the squirrel, evidently offended. "Why, I might just as well say I thought you were only a flesh-and-blood girl."

"Well, so I am," said Ruthie.

"Oh, come now," the squirrel cried contemptuously, "that will do for you! *You* flesh and blood! Why, you're no more flesh and blood than a soup-tureen!"

"Oh, stuff and nonsense!" exclaimed Ruthie indignantly.

"There, I thought you knew better," said the squirrel, in a friendlier tone; "of course you are."

"Of course I am what?" asked puzzled Ruthie.

"Why, stuff to be sure; just what you said," the squirrel responded.

"Stuff? what stuff? whatever do you mean?" queried Ruthie, in still deeper perplexity.

"What stuff?" echoed the squirrel. "How stupid you are! Why, the stuff that dreams are made of."

"Am I? oh, am I?" cried Ruthie, so excitedly that she almost tipped the squirrel out of her lap. "Why, that's in my school-book, and I've often wondered what it meant. Don't you know it says —

We are such stuff

As dreams are made of?

And, oh! I always wondered what the stuff could be — cretonne, or momie cloth, or what. I've had to parse that sentence very often."

"Well, the next time you pass it," said the squirrel, "you'll know it; so don't forget to bow to it."

"Wouldn't I look pretty bobbing my head at my grammar?" Ruthie exclaimed disdainfully.

"I don't know how pretty you would look," the squirrel answered, glancing up at her rather critically. "But it isn't enough to bob your head; you should kiss her. I hope you know how to show



A SOLEMN OLD BILLY-GOAT.

proper respect to old people," he added severely.

Ruthie looked down at him curiously.

"Kiss my grammar?" she said. And then, as she fathomed his meaning, "Oh, how perfectly ridiculous you are!" she exclaimed. "But now, who was it said that about dreams?"

"Why, I said it," the squirrel responded.

"No, you did not," said Ruthie sharply. "It's in my school-book. It was—let me see—it was—oh, dear!—his initials are—W. S.—I think."

"There's something in this room begins with W. S.," the squirrel said thoughtfully.

"No, no; it's not a game," protested Ruthie; "it's a person, and his initials are W. S."

"Well, that's me," said the squirrel. "W. S.—Wriggly Squirrel."

"What an idea! It's not you at all," Ruthie exclaimed. "Let me think. W. S.? Oh, I know now—Shakespeare—William Shakespeare; he said it."

"Well, isn't he a game?" asked the squirrel triumphantly. "He's in the Game of Authors."

Don't you know? You say: 'Let me see — I'll take — I'll take ' —and then you call for the card you want."

"Oh, yes; I know," said Ruthie. "I've often and often taken his whole family."

"Is that so?" said the squirrel dreamily. "Well, where did you take them?"

"Oh, how stupid!" Ruthie exclaimed. "I didn't take them anywhere. I mean in the game, you know."

"Oh, game!" sleepily said the squirrel. "Yes, I know about game. Why, I'm game myself sometimes."

"When are you game?" asked Ruthie.

"Why, in season, of course," the squirrel replied.

"In season?" echoed Ruthie. "What do you mean by in season? When are you in season?"

"Well, I'm just in season now to catch that train," said the squirrel suddenly; and, springing from Ruthie's lap, he whisked out through the car-door, and with a wave of his paw, he vanished from her sight.



"NOTHINGNESS."

"Well," said the surprised Ruthie, "that's the most singular thing I ever saw! Where can he have gone? I don't see any train. But," she said with a start, "I must be nearly home. Please, Mr. Conductor, haven't I got to my street yet?" She looked towards the rear platform, but no conductor was there. Only a solemn old billy-goat did she see, who, with that dreamy and far-away expression peculiar to all goats when at meals, was dining off an old tomato-can in blissful enjoyment. She rushed to the front platform. The horses, too, had disappeared, and she saw nothing ahead but the narrow car-tracks stretching far up a steep hill in the midst of clouds and nothingness.

"O, where am I?" she exclaimed despairingly. "O, Mr. Goat," she said, turning in dismay to her only companion, "do please tell me — where am I?"

The goat looked up from his tomato-can apparently in solemn displeasure. "Why, Miss Girl," he said, "you seem to me to be just where you are."

"Oh, I know that," said poor Ruthie; "but where am I going to?"

"How should I know?" the goat remarked.
"You ought to know your own business best. I haven't sent you anywhere."



JOAN.

"Well, but I wanted to get off at Clinton avenue," Ruthie explained dolefully; "and now we are way beyond."

"No, we are not," said the goat. "We haven't got beyond yet. We are here. That is beyond, ahead there."

"Oh, but you see I don't want to go beyond," explained Ruthie.

"Well, get off, then," said the goat. "Nobody's keeping you."

"Oh, but won't you stop the car, please?" Ruthie pleaded.

"I don't know," said the goat. "How do you stop it? What *is* the carplees?"

"Oh, you horrid, stupid old goat!" exclaimed disgusted Ruthie. "Where does this car go to?"

"I may be a goat, but this isn't a goat, too; this is a car," explained the goat.

"I didn't say it wasn't" — Ruthie began, but the goat interrupted her.

"Two negatives equal to one affirmative," he said severely.

Ruthie did not heed his interruption.

"I asked you where does this car go?" she said.

"You ought to know," the goat replied. "You are part of the cargo."

"Well!" said Ruthie wrathfully, "I must say you are the most selfish and disobliging old thing I ever saw."

"Present company excepted," said the goat, serenely chewing the last of the red label. "Have some of the can?"

"No," replied Ruthie shortly.

So the goat said nothing more, but chewed away on his toothsome morsel; and Ruthie, watching him as he ate, did not find herself at all surprised

to see him getting smaller and smaller, and the tomato-can growing larger and larger, until at last the goat disappeared altogether, apparently swallowed up by the can which now went bumpity-bump off the car step and rolled rapidly down the track until it was lost amidst the clouds.

"Well, now I'm all alone!" exclaimed Ruthie. "I wonder if I couldn't get off like the tomato-can. Let me see—how do you jump off a car? You either jump off the way the car is going, or you jump in the opposite direction. It's one way or the other. Dear me! I wish I knew which was which."

"A switch!" she heard a sharp little voice at her elbow exclaim. "I thought *your* hair was all your own."

Ruthie turned, and saw a dwarfish little person, who seemed to be constantly jumping from the seat of the car to the floor, and from the floor to the seat again, and who now came towards her in a series of short leaps, "for all the world like a little kangaroo," as Ruthie explained afterwards.

"Oh, who are you?" she asked, delighted to find company with her once more.

"Here am I, little Jumping Joan,
When nobody's with me I'm always alone,"

replied the little stranger, in a jingly tone.

"Well, you're not alone now, are you?" Ruthie said.

"Why, of course I am," was the reply. "You're nobody."

"Well, I declare," said Ruthie, greatly troubled. "I never saw such people as seem to be in this car. They do nothing but insult me with quibbles."

"Why, who's insulted you now?" demanded little Joan, as she perched upon the car-rail, and then jumped in through the door again.

"You have," said Ruthie. "You said I was nobody."

"Well, aren't you?" queried her companion. "Don't they call you so at home?"

Then Ruthie remembered that when secrets or confidences were being told at home, and objection was made to her overhearing them, her mother

or sisters would say, "Oh, she's nobody;" and she



AT THE JUMPING-OFF PLACE.

had to confess that they did call her so; "but," she added, "of course they don't really mean it, you know."

"But dear me," said little Jumping Joan, "that is a dreadfully wrong way to bring up children — not to mean what you tell them."

"The idea!" exclaimed indignant Ruthie. "I guess my mother knows how to bring up children as well as you!"

"Oh, but I'm not well, you know," said little Jumping Joan, catching at two of the hand-straps,

and swinging herself vigorously. "I'm going into a decline."

"Are you, though?" Ruthie said sympathetically. "Why, that's too bad! Can't you see a doctor and take it in time?"

"I don't like thyme, nor sage, nor any herbs, in fact," replied her curious little companion. "But why should I take anything?"

"Why, to save yourself from really going into a decline," explained Ruthie.

"But I don't want to save myself," little Jumping Joan asserted. "In fact, I am going into a decline at once. I decline to stay here any longer;" and with that she hopped out of the car in three jumps, and vanished instantly.

Then Ruthie sat down and began to cry.

"This is dreadful," she sobbed. "This is the very worst lot of people I ever met with. They do nothing but contradict and find fault and pun and quibble, and then leave me all alone in a very sudden and curious manner."

Just then with a loud whir-r-r-r, like a mechanical toy when it is running down, the car stopped, and

a voice cried out in an important manner, "for all the world like an elevated railroad brakeman," Ruthie thought :

" Jumping-off Place—last and only station ! all out here. Come ! Step lively, please ! "

Then Ruthie saw all the passengers (for suddenly the car seemed to be crowded with people), rush helter-skelter to the door, pushing and elbowing and jumping off as if in the greatest hurry. But, once off, they stood listlessly around, staring at the car and at each other, as if there was no such thing as being in a hurry. " Just as I have seen them do on the ferry-boat," Ruthie commented.

" Now, then, step lively ! " said the important voice, evidently addressing her. " Can't stop here all day."

So Ruthie hurried out of the car and found herself standing on the edge of a precipice—all alone. For the moment she stepped off the car step, passengers, horse-car tracks and everything suddenly disappeared, and she and the edge of the precipice were left alone together.

There was no doubt as to its being only the *edge* of a precipice, for there was nothing before her but space, and nothing behind her but space and she had to keep swaying backwards and forwards to keep her balance.

Just then the goat, the squirrel, and little Jumping Joan, all perched on the tomato can, sailed slowly towards her. The squirrel had raised his bushy tail as a sail, and little Jumping Joan was using one of the goat's legs as a tiller.

"When a girl," said the goat solemnly, as this curious craft sailed by, "when a girl swings herself on the little edge of nothing, as if she was last week's washing hanging wrong side up, it's high time that some one kept an eye on her."

"When a girl," said the squirrel, insolently stroking his whiskers and slightly lowering his sail, "when a girl puts on such airs as to think that she can live forever on a little strip of solitude, too stuck-up to ask company to stay to tea, it's high time that some one remonstrated."

"When a girl," said little Jumping Joan, bringing the goat's leg "hard a port," so as to bring her

craft quite near to Ruthie, "when a girl is so stupid that she doesn't know that the Jumping-off Place means a Jumping-off Place and not a Hanging-on Place, it's high time that some one took her in hand and gave her a lesson — like this !" and with that she dropped her novel tiller, stood erect for a second, and then jumped off the tomato can, which, relieved of her weight, tilted over on its heaviest side, while goat, squirrel and tomato can, thus unceremoniously upset, went sprawling and rolling downwards and soon dropped out of sight.

As Ruthie stretched forward to see what had become of this singular ship's company, she heard a voice coming from the abyss below, and repeating in sing-song tones :

The girl stood on the narrow speck,
Whence all but she had fled;
She feared the jump would break her neck,
Or hurt her giddy head.

Yet beautiful and bright she stood
Although she felt so bad;
A creature of heroic blood —
But just a trifle scared.

The time rolled on — she would not go
It really seemed absurd ;
Who jumps is sure to land, you know,
(Except a bat or bird.)

She called aloud : Hey, some one, hey !
O, shall I get a bump ?
She did not know the only way
To find out was — to jump !

The edge of the precipice was gradually disappearing. “ I can’t stand on nothing,” said Ruthie. “ It can’t be any worse to jump off than to stand here and wear off, and they called this the Jumping-off Place, anyhow. So — oh, dear ! where *shall* I land ? — here goes — one, two, three, and — away ! ” and with a little shiver and a little shake, and a little sigh and a little spring, Ruthie shut her eyes and leaped down from the Jumping-off Place.

CHAPTER II.

THE ELECTRIC BOY.

YOU don't know how queerly I felt," Ruthie said afterward, as she related her adventures, "when I jumped off from that little speck I had been standing on. I went dropping, and dropping, and all the time I felt inside of me — here," putting her hand on her heart — "a sort of goneness with a kind of a comeness on top of it; just like when you swing up real high, you know."

But as soon as Ruthie's feet touched something more substantial than air, the "goneness" and the "comeness" both ceased. She did not, however, stop as quickly or land as suddenly as she had expected. Her fall "kind o' tapered off to a point," as she expressed it, and she came down as lightly as a feather. Opening her eyes, she saw all around her a heaving and billowy mass of

something white. It was not water; it was not earth; what was it? where was she? She did not, however, stop to deliberate or investigate, but cautiously and carefully picked her way across the billows as daintily and as gingerly, she thought, as if she was treading on egg-shells.

But which way should she go? She was out of sight of land. On every side nothing to be seen but this vast heaving field of white billows.

"I don't seem to sink at all," she said to herself, "although it does seem as if I must 'slump through' every minute. But, dear me! I can't walk very far on this stuff, for I am so afraid that I shall go through that I have to nerve myself up not to step too hard; and it seems as if trying *not* to do a thing hurts just as much as to do it."

While she stood a moment considering which way to turn, a voice sang gayly out, it seemed almost beneath her feet:

Over the sea,
Over the sea,
Under a summer sky,

Over the sea,
Happy and free,
Went sailing my love and I.

Over the sea,
Over the sea,
I shouted a loud "Ahoy!"
Over the sea,
He answered me,
The bonny Electric Boy.

And after each verse the air seemed filled with merry voices, shouting out the rollicking chorus:

Then sing we "Ahoy!"
And shout we "Ahoy!"
At the top of our lungs so free;
Till with jolly "Ahoy!"
The Electric Boy
Answers back o'er the Egg-Shell Sea.

"Why, sure enough, they are egg-shells," said Ruthie, as she stooped down and took up a handful of the white particles at her feet. "I don't see how they can bear my weight."

"Ho, ho! you're only light weight," said the same mysterious voice.

"Well, I shall grow, sir," Ruthie responded tartly, looking all around for her invisible companion.



"SURE ENOUGH, THEY ARE EGG-SHELLS," SAID RUTHIE.

“Ho, ho! a grocer shouldn’t give light weight,” shouted a myriad voices in chorus.

Ruthie was completely mystified. “O, sirs,” she said appealingly, “will you please tell me how to get out of this Egg-shell Sea?”

But for answer came again the chorus.

Then Ruthie remembered that one summer when she was with her father among the Hamp-ton, she had heard the men at the life-saving stations shout “Ahoy!” to each other, when they wished to attract attention. So she rounded both her little hands into a speaking trumpet, and shouted through them, “Ahoy! ahoy!”

Listening intently, she thought she heard, far in the distance, the smallest possible reply: “Ahoy — your-self!”

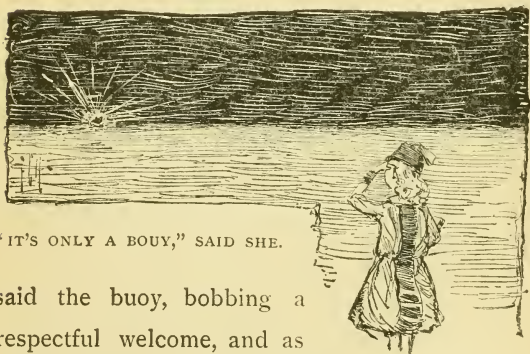
She tried it again: “Ahoy! ahoy!”

This time the answer came back in great thundering tones: “AH-HOY — YOUR-SELF!!” while the strong, clear beams of an electric light flashed full upon her face, and a broad pathway of brilliant light gleamed across the Egg-shell Sea.

As Ruthie walked towards the light she saw

that it proceeded from a curious white, black and red looking object that bobbed up and down with every swell of the Egg-shell Sea. "Why, it's only a buoy!" she said.

"The Electric Boy, ma'am, at your service,"



"IT'S ONLY A BOUY," SAID SHE.

said the buoy, bobbing a respectful welcome, and as Ruthie looked, it certainly did seem as if she could see in the buoy a resemblance to a jolly and puffed-out human face.

"Well," she said, regarding the object critically, "the Electric Boy I saw at the Museum was a real boy, full of electricity, and whoever touched him, really got a shock. While as for you" —

"Oh, I trust you won't be shocked if you happen to touch me," interrupted the buoy.

"O, no!" Ruthie hastened to assure him. "You look like a nice buoy, and" —

But the buoy interrupted her again. "Ah, but I'm not an ice buoy," he said; "it never freezes here, you know."

"I suppose not," replied Ruthie; and then as she looked across the tossing mass, she asked, "What goes on this sea?"

"Well — *I* don't," the buoy replied, with a sigh, and then he sang dismally :

Girls may come, and girls may go,
But I go on O, never, never — I go on — O — never !

"I don't know about that," said Ruthie. "You go on so that I don't have a chance to get a word in edgeways. But what I meant was, do you ever see a sail here?"

"Well, not often," the buoy answered. "You see I don't get a chance. There's never any one around that I can sell — except perhaps an inquisitive little girl, now and then;" and his electric light twinkled so merrily that Ruthie, who was about to answer sharply, thought better of it and

said, "But how do you keep your light going? where is the battery?"

"The Battery! you, a New York girl, and ask where the Battery is? Well, I am surprised!" said the Electric Boy.

"You know I didn't mean that!" Ruthie exclaimed hastily. "I mean the battery you are connected with."

"Oh, there is an Electric eel I am acquainted with, who lives just below me, and of course there's always a current between us, so it is easy to keep up the connection," explained the buoy.

"But he must swim away, sometimes," said Ruthie; "then, how do *you* do?"

"Me? Oh, I'm pretty well, I thank you," the buoy replied, so heartily, that his light actually beamed with good humor.

Ruthie looked at him suspiciously. "What a giddy thing you are!" she said.

"Well," said the buoy, "I may be light-headed, but I'm no blockhead like the common wooden buoys. I know how to make light of my surroundings, and I am considered a safe guide."

"Then, sir," said Ruthie, "perhaps you can direct me to the shore. Where am I? Where can I go? and how can I get there?"

"There, there," protested the buoy; "I am not a wholesale dealer in questions and answers. One question at a time, please."

"Well, then," said Ruthie, "where am I?"

"You are in the centre of the Egg-shell Sea, off the coast of No-Man's Land, and in the State of Perpetual Buoyancy — I'm the Buoy, and here's the sea all around you," he responded glibly.

"Well," said Ruthie, looking around at the heaving white billows, "and where do I go from here?"

"Let's see," said the buoy, turning his light full upon her; "you are a girl, and — about twelve years old?"

"Ten, sir, the fifteenth of last September."

"Then you go straight across to No-Man's Land," the buoy stated.

"But why is it called No-Man's Land?"

"Because no man lives there."

"Why, how is that?" asked Ruthie.

"Well, I declare ; you're a regular interrogation point, aren't you ?" said the buoy. " But I'll tell



SHE MISSED HER NOSE.

you," he added, " no man can see just what the children see, nor in just the way they see. So, as no man can put himself in the place of the children, no man can live in this country of the children to

which you have come—the Region of Childish Fancies. Now, then, if no man can live in it, isn't it No-Man's Land ?" And quite exhausted by this display of information and reasoning, the buoy bobbed nearly out of sight.

" But who does live there, then ? "

" Now, see here ! " the Electric Boy broke out, while his light snapped and sputtered indignantly.

" My business here is to furnish light matter to

passengers on the Egg-shell Sea, but to furnish replies to your endless questions is no light matter, and therefore it is not my business to bother with you any longer."

"Well, I am sure," said Ruthie in a reproachful tone, "you needn't get mad about it. But there was one other question you were to answer, you know. I should be perfectly happy if I could only step foot on shore. Now, how do I get there?"

"Follow your nose," said the Boy shortly. "Here comes the blackbird!"

Ruthie was conscious of a dark object sweeping before her eyes.



AWAY FLEW THE BLACKBIRD.

She felt a sharp and sudden tweak of her little nose, and uttering a quick cry, she clapped both hands quickly to her face and knew at once that something was missing. And so there was, sure enough, for the blackbird had darted at

her face, and, in a second, had nipped off her nose.

There was another whir of wings, and as the Electric Boy turned his stream of light towards the shore of No-Man's Land, away flew that thievish blackbird with poor Ruthie's precious little nose. What did she do?

Why, she followed her nose, as the Electric Boy had directed her.

But not without some anxiety as to the loss of that important feature, did she chase along the path of light, following the blackbird who, with her nipped-off nose in his beak, kept just far enough ahead of her to be out of her reach.

"Oh, say!" she panted, "do please give me back my nose; won't you?"

And that wicked blackbird actually looked back and winked at her.

"Oh, I do wish he would sing," she said, remembering the fable of the crow and the piece of cheese. "Perhaps I can get him to."

So she tried one of her pretty little school songs, which, however, did not sound exactly right to her, even as she sung it:



THE FRIENDS CHANGE INTO FROGS.

Little blackbird on the sea, on the sea, Eggshell Sea,
Little blackbird on the sea, sing a song to me !
Sing about the noses — have you nipped them all ?
Sing, and then of course, dear, down my nose will fall.
Little blackbird on the sea, on the sea, Eggshell Sea,
Little blackbird on the sea, sing a song to me !

But no song notes came from Mr. Blackbird's throat ; and Ruthie, in despair, tried a new appeal :

“ Perhaps if I speak, *Douglas, Douglas, tender and true* to him, he will like it as much as our examiner did at school last week, and give me back my nose as a reward of merit,” she said hopefully ; and making a sort of running courtesy, she spoke in her prettiest manner :

Could you come back to me, blackbird, blackbird,
And put my nose on again where it grew,
I would be so thankful, so thankful, blackbird,
Blackbird, blackbird, slender and few.

Never a scornful word should grieve ye,
I'd smile on ye sweet as ever I knew —
Never the salt on your tail I'd scatter,
Blackbird, blackbird, slender and few.

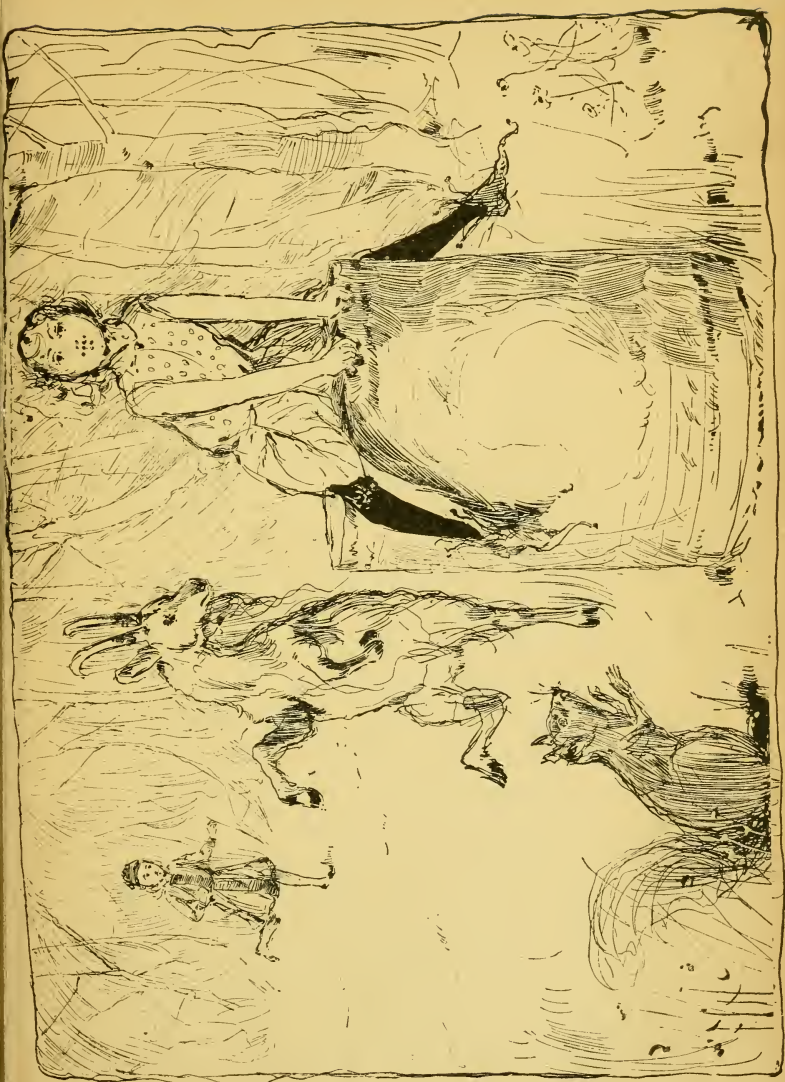
Stretch out your beak to me, blackbird, blackbird,
Drop down my nose like the gentle dew,
As I lay my hand on these eggshells, blackbird,
Blackbird, blackbird, slender and few.

“Somehow that sounds kind of ridiculous,” said Ruthie gravely ; “but it is what I mean, anyhow ; and my teacher says that our language should be the expression of our deepest thoughts.”

Just then the blackbird, turning around to give her another friendly wink, laughed so loudly at Ruthie's perplexed face that the nose dropped from his beak. She, of course, darted forward to pick it up, and as she joyfully clutched her lost treasure, she noticed that she was once more on solid ground. Far out, across the swelling Egg-shell Sea, she saw the gleam and flicker of the electric light, and over the billows came the Electric Boy's jolly farewell. He seemed to have entirely recovered from his attack of ill-humor :

Good-night, Ruthie,
Good-night, Ruthie,
Good-night, Roo-thie —
I'm going to leave you now !

With that, out went the light, suddenly and completely, and the Electric Boy was lost in the gloom. But on shore all was brightness and beauty. Flowers were nodding and laughing, birds were



RUTHIE SPIES HER THREE OLD FRIENDS PLAYING LEAP FROG.

singing, and so broad a smile wrinkled the great face of nature that Ruthie was considerably shaken up by the jolly convulsion.

"I declare," said Ruthie, starting, "everything is so bright and beautiful that I really forgot all about my nose," and she hastily clapped it on.

"Hey, hey! Not that way! not that way!" cried the blackbird, perched on a bush near by. "Dear, dear, Ruthie! you've got it on wrong side up; and let me tell you, there's nothing in No-Man's Land for a little girl to turn up her nose at!"

Ruthie hurriedly twisted the misplaced nose around to its proper position, and then asked:

"But why did you nip off my nose?"

"Well, you see," the blackbird explained, "the King of the Land of Nod has offered a fancy price for the nose of a perfectly happy girl. He wants to add it to his collection of *bric-à-brac* in the Royal Museum, and he is in his counting-house now, counting out his money to pay for it."

"But surely I wasn't a happy girl when you nipped off my nose," Ruthie said.

"I know that," replied the blackbird, "but you said distinctly that you would be perfectly happy if you could only step foot on shore, and so I thought I'd make sure of your nose first and then ask you for it afterwards ; when you were perfectly happy, you know."

"Oh, but I couldn't be perfectly happy without my nose !" protested Ruthie. "How could I? How could any one be happy without a nose ?"

The blackbird looked at her thoughtfully.

"No one knows till he tries," he said, "but you are not 'no one,' so of course you don't know. Well, you can keep your nose. You haven't much of one to spare anyhow ; so trot along. Your chariot is waiting just beyond to take you to the city."

"The city !" said Ruthie ; "what city ?"

"Why, the great city of Play-Day Town, of course," replied the blackbird. "It is the chief town in No-Man's Land, and is such a capital place for sport that they call it the Capital City. You'll have lots of fun there."

Ruthie was all excitement at once. "Oh, how do I get there?" she asked.

"Just around that bend in the road you will find your chariot waiting," the blackbird answered, "so good-by till I see you again;" and as Ruthie said "good-by" in reply, the blackbird flew far away over the Egg-shell Sea.

When Ruthie came to the bend in the road indicated by the blackbird, she saw no chariot, to be sure, but, to her great surprise, whom should she spy but her three old friends, the squirrel, the goat, and little Jumping Joan, playing at leap frog over the tomato can.

They called loudly to her to come and join in their game, and she, always ready for a romp, hurried towards them.

"Take your turn! take your turn!" they shouted. "It's no fair jumping out of turn."

Over the can went the squirrel, over the can went the goat, over the can went little Jumping Joan, and following quickly, came Ruthie. But, just as she was in the act of leaping over the tomato can, she seemed to be held in mid-air

while her old friends, the squirrel, the goat, and little Jumping Joan, seemed to change into great green frogs. With them were a dozen other green-backed croakers, and leaping and tumbling over each other they all went, in a boisterous game of real, live leap-frog. Then the tomato can, above which Ruthie was suspended, changed into a gorgeous chariot, all glittering with gold and jewels, and lined with crimson velvet, in which Ruthie reclined at her ease, very comfortable and happy. Before her in great leaps went twelve great frogs, in silver and crimson harness, their emerald coats gleaming in the sun as in a mighty game of leap-frog they drew the golden chariot swiftly over the ground. Eight other frogs leaped as a guard of honor on either side of the chariot, and four more closed the jovial procession. And so, in royal state, with music, and laughter, and song all around her, little Ruthie rode gayly up to the great gate of the city of Play Day Town, the capital of No-Man's Land.

CHAPTER III.

RUTHIE IS RECEIVED AT COURT.



DASHING young person clothed in Lincoln green came skipping through the city gate as Ruthie and her escort drew near. Behind him, with a hop, skip, and a jump, came a dozen followers in russet coats

and sky-blue Tam O'Shanter bonnets. He darted, first this way and then that, jumped over impossibly high posts, and squeezed through imperceptibly narrow openings, hopping now on one foot, and now on the other, and ended by playing at leap-

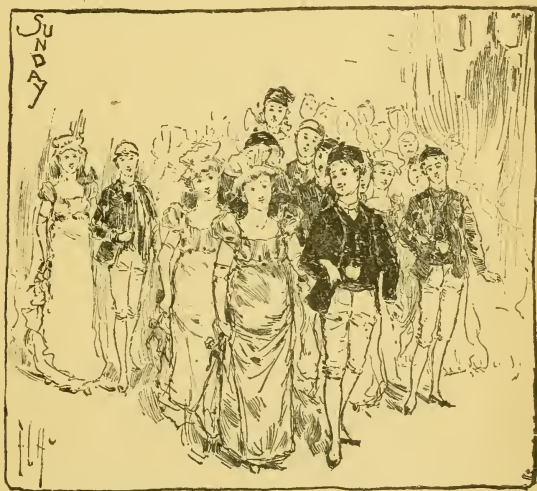
frog over every great green-back in Ruthie's train.

All the while he kept turning to his followers and shouting gleefully, "Follow your leader!" and immediately every attendant would go through the very feat that he had performed. Then they all ranged six abreast, on either side of the chariot, while their leader, piling three frogs one upon the other, sat astride the topmost frog, and looking straight at Ruthie, shouted out, "Hello, you!" in such a startling manner that Ruthie began to think she had met an escaped lunatic asylum. Nor did she feel very much easier when, from his lofty perch, the dashing young person in Lincoln green pointed his finger at each one of the group in rotation, and began what Ruthie supposed must be an address of welcome, "though," she thought, "it certainly does sound natural." And thus he went on, in a rapid sing-song :

Eene, meene, monee, mi,
Tuskalona, bona, stri,
Hare, ware, frown, wack,

Hallico-ballico,
Wee-wo-wack !
O-U-T spells out —
You are OUT !

And, sure enough, the instant he stopped, out from her comfortable seat in the crimson-lined



THIS IS THE WAY WE GO TO CHURCH.

chariot popped Ruthie, "for all the world like a Jack-in-the-box," she thought, and landed on the frog's back, directly facing her welcomer. But

that singular individual, in great haste, tumbled heels-over-head to the ground, and then helter-skelter towards the city gate scurried frogs-escort, the dashing young person in Lincoln green and all his attendants, leaving poor Ruthie alone, sitting on the ground and staring at this unexpected stampede in much dismay and bewilderment.

But the leader looked over his shoulder, and waving his hand with a summoning gesture, he shouted :

“ Hey ! Come on you — Personal Pronoun ! ”

This was adding insult to injury.

“ I’m not a Personal Pronoun ! ” Ruthie shouted back indignantly.

“ Why, of course you are ! ” he screamed.

“ Of course you are ! ” echoed the rest of his train, who had halted in their scamper, and were looking back at Ruthie.

“ You’re *it*, aren’t you ? ” asked the leader.

“ And isn’t *it* a personal pronoun ? ”

“ Oh, it’s a game of tag, is it ? ” cried Ruthie, quite reassured. “ Why didn’t you say so ? I didn’t know you were playing. ”

And rising quickly, she rushed toward the throng, who turned hastily and fled through the city gate.

But at the gate, which seemed to be a great green baize door, Ruthie paused for breath; and as she did so, she saw on the gate the word PUSH, in letters composed of large brass-headed nails.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "I wonder if Mr. Push really does live here? I've seen his name on doors like this ever so often, but I have never seen him yet. Perhaps, as I am a stranger here, it would be proper to ask for him, and not rush right in like a big tom-boy."

So she knocked on the gate in a ladylike manner. Instantly it swung open so suddenly that she nearly fell in headlong, and she found herself face to face with a most singular-looking youth. His hair stood straight out from the back of his head, his coat was thrown away open, and there was a most determined expression on his face, as if he were about to grapple with some resisting force. He seized both of Ruthie's hands and pulled her within the gate so vigorously that she

had scarcely breath enough left to ask : " Please, sir, does Mr. Push live here ? "

He let go of her so quickly that she very nearly fell backwards.

" T'other side of the gate," he said, bracing himself against the wall in a desperate, but disconsolate manner.

" T'other side of the gate ! " he repeated as Ruthie continued to look at him with much curiosity.

" Oh, I don't care to see him particularly," said Ruthie. " You see I saw his name on the outside of your door, and I supposed, of course, that he lived here."

" T'other side of the gate, I tell you," said this singular individual, rather despairingly. " I live here. See — P-U-L-L," he spelled out, pointing to the brass letters on his side of the green baize — " that's me ! "

" Oh," said Ruthie, " then you are Mr. Pull ; and Mr. Push is ? " —

" T'other side of the gate, I keep a-telling of you," he said. " See here ! " And he grasped the

HER HIGHNESS, THE PRINCESS RUTHIE.



gate handle so suddenly and swung it open so quickly that another singular-looking person who seemed to have been pressing against it, fell in headlong. As he picked himself up in a great rage and rushed wildly at Pull, Ruthie noticed that he had a very flattened-out expression about him; as though his life was passed under conditions of constant pressure.

“That’s Push,” announced Pull; and then, grasping each other’s shoulders, these two singular guardians of the city gate pushed and pulled each other over the open space within the gate. “Just like a couple of goats, or roosters, or — boys,” thought Ruthie. Then when they had seemingly exhausted themselves in this undecided wrestling-match, they locked arms, and standing before Ruthie, swayed to and fro and sang this rather doleful and monotonous duet:

It’s Pull and Push —

It’s Push and Pull,

Till our cup of misery’s nearly full;

It’s Push and Pull —

It's Pull and Push,
And we never can go 'round the Mulberry Bush!

Here, at the gate,
(We beg to state)
It seems our fate
To stand and wait;

With our Pull and Push,
With our Push and Pull,
Our cup of misery's nearly full!
Must we always Pull,
Must we always Push,
While the others go 'round the Mulberry Bush?

Oh, it's bah! for our Pull;
And it's pah! for our Push;
Why can't we go 'round the Mulberry Bush?

But this was a conundrum that Ruthie did not stop to answer, for by this time her ears had caught the sound of laughter and singing, and turning her back on the woes and complainings of this curious pair, she walked rapidly towards a

large open space where a great crowd seemed collected and from which she caught the refrain :

All on a frosty morning.

“ Why, it is frosty, I declare ! ” she exclaimed as she felt the cold nipping her fingers and toes. So she ran rapidly toward the crowd in the Square, and joined at once in the brisk movement and merry singing.

In the centre of the open space grew a great mulberry bush, and around this was gathered a group of dear little girls, who, with skirts looped up and pink arms bare, were scrubbing away in tubs of steaming soap-suds, while other little girls were hanging their “ dollies’ wash ” on red, white and blue clothes-lines that stretched from the mulberry bush to the hands of certain velvet-coated little boys. And the little girls sang as they scrubbed :

This is the way we wash our clothes,

All on a Monday morning.

Then the little boys, still holding the red, white and blue clothes-lines, trotted around the bush, singing :

Here we go 'round the Mulberry Bush,
All on a frosty morning.

And as Ruthie joined gleefully in the scrubbing and the skipping, she sympathized deeply with poor funny Push and Pull who could never take a hand at this jolly work. Suddenly the tubs and clothes-lines disappeared as if by magic, and at once all the little girls grew flushed and rosy over the ironing-tables on Tuesday morning, and folded and put away the great "dollies' wash" on Wednesday morning, and scrubbed the floor on Thursday morning, and swept the house on Friday morning, and baked their cake on Saturday morning, while after each household change the velvet-coated boys went skipping around the great bush, caroling :

Here we go 'round the Mulberry Bush,
All on a frosty morning.

After Saturday's baking was over, and all the crowd had feasted royally on the sweet and inviting cake, there came a sudden change. The looped-up dresses were shaken out into puffs, flounces, and long court trains; the rolled-up sleeves were drawn down with ribbons and laces over the pink little arms, the mob caps were set jauntily on the fair little heads, and then, with dollies neatly dressed, and service-books in



THE CHIEF OF THE GAMEKEEPERS.

hand, the dear little maids leaned on the arms of their little velvet-coated cavaliers, and with Ruthie in their midst as a welcome guest, the

whole throng swept along the sunny street, singing decorously :

This is the way we go to church,
All on a Sunday morning.

How happy and delighted Ruthie was ! And she entered into the enjoyment of the moment so heartily that, when the great French doll she was pushing before her in a beautiful doll carriage, turned and said to her, " Little mamma, you must be tired ; let me push you a while," it didn't seem at all strange ; and without a word, Ruthie seated herself in the doll carriage, while Mademoiselle the doll trundled her rapidly towards the palace. But as she was rolling along, suddenly and somehow—she never quite understood how—the doll carriage changed into her old acquaintance the goat, who ambled along while she sat in state upon his back, riding on a gorgeous side-saddle of crimson and gold. Before her, as her herald, galloped the squirrel, with banner and trumpet, mounted on a great green frog, while little jumping Joan, upon

another frog, followed after as maid-of-honor to her Highness, the Princess Ruthie.

So Ruthie rode to the palace in grand style, and as they approached, the squirrel blew a shrill blast upon his trumpet, and sang out :

I'm the herald of Ruthie

So winsome and gay ;

The herald of Ruthie,

Who comes here to play.

Swing open, O joy-gates ! shout welcome acclaims !

For Ruthie is coming to join in your games !

Then the great palace doors swung open wide, and with a welcoming trumpet peal down the steps walked, soberly and sedately, something that looked, so it appeared to Ruthie, very like a big newspaper, with legs and arms, and, O, such a funny little head, and he sang loudly in answer to the squirrel's summons :

If you are the Herald,

Then I'm the Tribune !

To the wants of fair Ruthie

Our sports we'll attune,

I bear her our welcome ! I give her 'good-day ;'
Here's the Chief of the Gamekeepers ! Ho, clear the way

As his song ended, a great roll of crimson carpeting appeared in the doorway, and, making a low bow to Ruthie, proceeded to unroll itself down the centre of the grand stairway of the palace, and then, skipping gayly down the carpeted steps, with trumpets sounding and drums beating, came the Chief of the Gamekeepers, a beautiful young prince in a suit of violet satin, and holding in his hand a jewelled hat, trimmed with waving plumes. With a low bow, he approached Ruthie and said joyously :

" I love my love with an R because she is Radiant ; I hate her with an R because she is Reserved ; I took her to the sign of the Ragamuffin and treated her to Rinktums and Rice ; her name is Ruthie, and she comes from Real Life ! "

And Ruthie answered without a moment's hesitation : " I love my love with a G because he is Gallant ; I hate him with a G because he is Geometric—he seems to treat me so squarely," she

thought naïvely to herself ; “ I took him to the sign of the Griffin and treated him to *Glacé’s* and Glue ; his name is Gloriso the Gamekeeper, and he comes from Gigamaree ! ”

Then the Chief of the Gamekeepers again bowed low to Ruthie, and Ruthie bowed low, and the Herald and the Tribune bowed low, and so did little Jumping Joan, and, last of all, so did the goat, but he was so stiff in the knees, and bowed so low, that he couldn’t get up again, and Ruthie took the Chief of the Gamekeepers’ hand, and walked off between the goat’s horns, while as for that stiff-jointed animal, the squirrel thumped him soundly in the ribs with his trumpet, and said : “ There, old fellow, you needn’t repeat that so-lo ! ”

As Ruthie stepped to the ground, all the pretty little maids that had stood in a row in My Lady’s Garden sprang from their flower-beds and welcomed Ruthie with the musical ring of their silver bells, and the low clang of their cockle shells, while twenty-six lively little fellows, in rainbow-colored costumes, ranged themselves in two rows up and down the thirteen steps of the grand stair-

way, and as Ruthie and the Chief of the Gamekeepers walked slowly up the stairs under a canopy of yellow satin, Ruthie's herald and the Tribune of the Games walked ahead of them, arm-in-arm, and, facing each of the twenty-six little pages in turn, the squirrel would announce :

“ Ruthie comes ! ”

Then the Tribune would follow with :

“ How does she come ? ”

Whereupon the page addressed would shake out a silken banner emblazoned with one of the letters of the alphabet in gleaming gold. Pointing to this he would say “ Actively ! ” and the next, when asked, would reply, “ Bewitchingly ! ” and the next “ Charmingly ! ” and the next “ Daintily ! ” and so on in turn through the whole twenty-six letters up to “ X-statically ! ” (at which Ruthie felt for her little pocket dictionary, to look up the word) “ Yearningly ! ” and “ Zealously ! ”

Then the Chief of the Gamekeepers said :

Letters see,

Letters see,

How Ruthie can walk to the throne with me !



THE TWENTY-SIX LITTLE PAGES.

And the twenty-six lively rainbow-colored pages answered in chorus :

O, we Letters *will* see —

If you'll let us alone —

How Ruthie can walk with you up to the Throne !

Reaching the broad piazza at the head of the grand stairway, Ruthie and her escort paused awhile to listen to the three fiddlers whom Old King Cole had sent to furnish the music at Ruthie's Reception. And they scraped away on their violins so madly and so joyously that the Four-Horned-Lady-always-Four-Horned requested the Genteel-Gentleman-always-Genteel to beg them to play with less violence. But the three fiddlers, never even stopping to look up, sung out in reply :

One apiece we must have

Ere the music begins ;

So of course we can't play

With less violins !

At this, the Four-Horned-Lady-always-Four-Horned remarked to the Genteel-Gentleman-al-

ways-Genteel that she *did* think those fiddlers were *really* too ridiculous for anything. But as the Genteel-Gentleman-always-Genteel was also always correct, and had never been known to make a mistake, he gravely corrected her, and said, "Let us be exact : are they not *three* ridiculous?"

Then he politely handed his companion a horn which the Four-Horned-Lady-always-Four-Horned

as politely declined, "because," she said, "the fiddlers are not in the game, you know."



After the serenade, Ruthie was conducted into the great Throne Room of the

palace, and seated on a beautiful throne ; and here all the court were presented to her by the Chief of the Gamekeepers, who acted as Master of Ceremonies, while all the other Gamekeepers stood around

the Throne on little squares of Axminster carpeting, which they called "Hunk." The Genteel-Gentleman-always-Genteel escorted to Ruthie's Reception the Four-Horned-Lady-always-Four-Horned, and perched on his shoulder was the Eagle with the Golden Beak, Diamond Eyes, Silver Claws, and Purple Feathers. There came also the big Puss-in-the-Corner, leading the Blind-Man-in-Buff, and the Governor of Copenhagen with the Lady-who-keeps-the-Post-office, and the Knight-out-of-Spain with Queen Anne-who-sits-in-the-sun, and lots and lots of others whose names were all familiar to Ruthie. Even the splendid Lord Treasurer came bringing her the golden key of the closet in which the Forfeits were kept, and finally, when all had welcomed her, came the Chief of the Gamekeepers himself, with the royal Pillow and Keys. Kneeling at Ruthie's feet, he gave her the kiss of welcome, while all the court sang joyously and cheerily :

Sweet, sweet,
Thus we greet
Ruthie all-entrancing,
Fair, fair,

O'er her hair,
Golden beams are glancing.
Sing, sing,
Joy-bells ring,
Here 'tis Play-Day ever ;
Dear, dear,
Know no fear —
Sorrow comes here never !

CHAPTER IV.

GOING TO THE OPERA.

ALMOST before the strains of the "Sorrow comes here never" died away they all sprang to their feet and around and around the great Throne Room the whole court darted and dashed in a splendid game of Tag. The polished floor shone like ice and, somehow or other, almost before Ruthie could wonder how it came to pass, every one in the room was whirling around on roller-skates. Tag on roller-skates! It was glorious.

The Gamekeepers darted in every direction with their little pieces of carpet, or "Hunk," and just at the very instant that any one wished to "touch hunk," there it was close at hand. Every one was "it," just when he or she wanted to be, and no one was caught unless he or she felt like

it. And so, sliding and gliding, and racing and chasing, around and around the great Throne Room, they all scampered until Ruthie panted for breath and thought that she had never known quite so nice a game of Tag in all her life.

Then, after they had all "cooled off" at the great Lemonade Fountain, three or four of the rainbow-hued pages took their places around the Throne. The Chief of the Gamekeepers cried out, "Now, then, hide your eyes!" and the obedient pages instantly took out their eyes and hid them under the rugs, or in their pockets. And while they counted up to five hundred all the rest of that jolly company secreted themselves behind rocks and trees and in all sorts of curious hiding-places — for, suddenly, there was the whole room full of the most convenient nooks and corners and rocks and trees just when they were wanted. And then the pages, having counted up to five hundred, put in their eyes again and went peering and poking about the room with long poles, like a boat-hook or a shepherd's crook, to pull the fugitives out of their hiding-places; and, while they searched

for the hiders, the Gamekeepers scattered their strips of "Hunk" around the room and, suddenly, there would come a great rush as with ringing shouts of "Relieve O!" the hiders scampered to their places of safety.

Well, after this very real game of "Hide-and-Seek" had been kept up, long and boisterously, until every one was flushed and tired with all the running and dodging and laughing, the Chief of the Gamekeepers cried out, "What goes up the chimney?"

And Ruthie, thinking it might be a conundrum, answered promptly, "Why, smoke."

"Then the play's broke!" shouted every one in the room and, with that, puff! came a great cloud of smoke and, when it had cleared away, the nooks and corners, the rocks and trees had all vanished and the floor of the Throne Room began to move up and up, "just like the elevator at Arnold's or Loeser's," thought Ruthie. Suddenly it stopped and, behold! there they were in a beautiful banquet hall, with a long dining-table in the centre on which were the most lovely toy dishes and doll's

dinner-services that could be imagined, and the same charming French dolls that Ruthie had seen in the square of the Mulberry Bush waited at table and the whole court sat down to a brilliant and beautiful make-believe feast. In fact they all ate so much "make-believe" food and drank so much "make-believe" tea and coffee that Ruthie declared she felt as full as—well, as a Third Avenue Elevated Railroad train or a Brooklyn Bridge-car at six o'clock, "because," she said, "my papa says they are the *fullest* things he knows of."

Then the goat danced the sailor's hornpipe on the soup-tureen, turned bottom side up for the purpose, and the squirrel waltzed elegantly with the sugar-tongs, while the Eagle with the Golden Beak, Diamond Eyes, Silver Claws, and Purple Feathers, sang the ballad of "The Lobster and the Quail" so touchingly that an *encore* was demanded. So he sang again with much force and feeling :

The Lobster on the quarter-deck
Sang sweetly to the Quail,
"Come to me, dear,
Come to me, here,

As merrily we sail,
O'er land and sea
There's none like thee,
Bird of the nut-brown tail."

The Quail demurely shook her head —
And then she looked aghast !
For stealthily,
The Weasel, he
Came climbing down the mast !
He checked her moans,
He crunched her bones,
And sighed when all was past !

The Lobster on the quarter-deck
Looked o'er the ocean's swell,
And dreamily
Composed a glee,
The coy young Quail to quell.
For love is blind,
As love does find —
And *both* did love her well !

When the applause and the murmurings of
"How sweet !" and "Wasn't it beautiful ?" had
subsided, the Chief of the Gamekeepers cleared

the table and, marking it off in squares, made all the court act as counters while he and Ruthie played with these novel counters a splendid game of Parchesi on the dining-table. And though the Blind-Man-in-Buff would persist in losing his way and would stumble into the wrong square, though Puss-in-the-Corner would worry and frighten the squirrel, though the Genteel-Gentleman-always-Genteel would in his over-politeness escort Queen Anne-who-sits-in-the-Sun to her square or stay behind in order to be agreeable to the Four-Horned-Lady-always-Four-Horned, still, as Ruthie said, all these perplexities only made the game more lively. At last Ruthie won the game and, mounted on the goat, rode as victor in triumph around the table with a smilax-wreathed salad dish on her head as a crown and the squirrel frantically waving a yellow and crimson doily as the banner of the conqueror.

"How do I look to go to the opera, my dear?" asked Queen Anne-who-sits-in-the-Sun.

"The opera?" said Ruthie, quite puzzled, "what opera?"

"Why, our court opera, to be sure," answered Queen Anne-who-sits-in-the-Sun. "We always



TAG ON ROLLER-SKATES.

have an opera here — well, whenever we like; and as we always like, why of course we can always have it. So, how do I look?"

"Why, you know you always look the same," Ruthie responded. "Don't you know —

'As fair as a lily
As brown as a bun.' "

"Talking of buns," said Queen Anne-who-sits-in-the-Sun, "did you ever see a bun dance on the table?"

But Ruthie had heard that before and was not to be caught with old riddles.

"Of course," she replied carelessly, "I saw abundance of everything on this table only a little while ago."

"It's not polite to answer conundrums correctly," said Queen Anne-who-sits-in-the-Sun, rather touchily; "you should always say 'I don't know,' you know."

"But I do know, you know," said truthful Ruthie.

"How do you know I know?" demanded her companion.

"Oh, I don't know you know, you know, but I do know I know, you know," Ruthie explained.

"What an absurd child!" exclaimed Queen Anne-who-sits-in-the-Sun. "Why, how can" —

But just here the Chief of the Gamekeepers

called out, "Now, then ; who's for the opera ? " and immediately every one sprang up on the dining-table and sat there, Turk fashion, waiting for the next move.

"Hitch up!" commanded the Chief of the Gamekeepers, and the twenty-six rainbow-hued pages quickly harnessed six heavy black-walnut chairs to the dining-table and handed the reins to the Chief of the Gamekeepers. He cracked his long whip and shouted



A HORNPIPE ON THE SOUP TUREEN.

"Get up there !" to his fiery steeds and, with the Tribune at his right hand tooting away on a long tally-ho coach horn, with the squirrel at his left hand, frantically waving the yellow and crimson

doily, with six pages galloping ahead as outriders mounted on spirited high-chairs, and six more closing the procession on prancing crimson-covered piano-stools, around and around the great Throne Room at a tearing rate went the dinner-table carrying the whole jolly court to the opera.

"Where is the opera, please?" asked Ruthie of Puss-in the-Corner.

"Oh, it's right here; we'll be there in a jiffy if we keep on at this rate," Puss-in-the-Corner replied. "Hello there, hold fast! Look out for that turn, Ruthie, or you'll get pitched overboard. Goodness, how these chairs do travel!"

"What is the opera to be?" asked Ruthie, still thirsting for information.

Puss-in-the-Corner consulted his watch. "Well, if we get there on Time," he said, "it will be 'Bachelor Blue and the London Lassie,' but if we are late the chances are that we shall all be sold."

"Oh dear, I hope we sha'n't be late. It would be dreadful to have to be sold. Imagine the auctioneer offering Me for sale. 'Now, then, who takes the next lot? One Ruthie' " —



POOR PERPLEXED BACHELOR BLUE.

"A trifle shopworn and somewhat the worse for wear but warranted to be sound, kind and true!" put in the squirrel.

"Dear, dear, though; don't be late," pleaded Ruthie.

"Well, Time flies, you know," Puss-in-the-Corner explained, "so if we can only get on Time, we're all right."

"Here comes Time!" shouted the outriders.

"Take him by the forelock!" called out the Gamekeepers.

So the Chief of the Gamekeepers took Time by the forelock and all the court clambered up behind.

"That's all right; now we are on Time, you see," said Puss-in-the-Corner, as he helped Ruthie up, "and here we are at the Opera!"

In an instant, by one of those sudden transformations that were continually bewildering Ruthie, in this town of Play-Day, the dinner-table changed into a stage with a beautiful curtain of satin and real point lace, with footlights, and decorations and luxurious boxes in one of which sat Ruthie with

the Chief of the Gamekeepers. She heard with delight the spirited overture by the full orchestra and waited in sweet and eager anticipation until the lights flashed up and the curtain rose. And then, with all her eyes and ears, Ruthie drank in the



A WALTZ WITH THE SUGAR-TONGS.

song, and scenery, and action of the curious and comical opera of "BACHELOR BLUE AND THE LONDON LASSIE." And such an opera as it was! Of course, one cannot attempt to describe it here.

Whoever could describe one of those

bewitching and bewildering operas they have in No-Man's Land? Even Miss Ruthie's report of it was rather misty and uncertain and she herself, as she has tried to remember a half-forgotten air, has said time and again, "O, why didn't I bring the libretto away with me?" Perhaps that

libretto may some day come from No-Man's Land, but it is enough now to state that, as Ruthie thought it all over and tried to remember the plot, she came to the conclusion that it was the affecting story of the poor bachelor in "Mother Goose" whose woes had so often aroused her sympathies :

When I was a bachelor
I lived by myself
And all the bread and cheese I got
I put upon the shelf.

The rats and the mice,
They made such a strife,
I was forced to go to London,
And get myself a wife.

The streets were so small,
And the lanes were so narrow,
I was forced to bring my wife home
In a wheelbarrow.

The wheelbarrow broke,
My wife had a fall —
And down came wheelbarrow,
Wife and all.

Many and many a time since that remarkable

day has Ruthie shut her eyes and seen it all passing before her "Just like a dream," she says : the bright stage, the lively action, the rollicking songs and choruses and a confused mass of gayly-dressed rats and mice surging and singing and scurrying around poor perplexed Bachelor Blue. Costumes and colors and comical action crowded upon delighted little Ruthie as she sat so comfortably in the luxurious private box with the Chief of the Gamekeepers and she didn't take her eyes off the stage from the first scene where the Robber Rats and Mice came trooping around the poor Bachelor, to the grand finale where the London Lassie picking herself up from the broken wheelbarrow swooped down upon the marauders and swept them all out of the Bachelor's house with her broom and a jolly song.

But, no sooner had the strains of the final chorus ceased than whisk ! away vanished stage, curtain, orchestra, opera, and all, and in their place Ruthie saw a beautiful parlor, luxuriously furnished. Into this they all stepped and when they were comfortably seated the Chief of the Game-

keepers told them to put their hands in their laps, palm to palm. Then with his hands, in the same position, he would stop before each one and, seeming to drop something into their hand would say :

“Hold fast all I give you ! hold fast all I give you !”

Ruthie really did feel something drop into her palms as he stopped before her an instant, but, though she was dreadfully curious, she made no sign.

The Chief of the Gamekeepers stood facing them all. “Button, button ! who’s got the button ?” he demanded.

No answer. Each one looked at his or her neighbor inquiringly, but no one replied to the question. Then the Chief of the Gamekeepers said, “The one who’s got the button, rise !”

“I’m not going to rise,” said Ruthie to herself. “He can find out for himself.”

Not going to rise, eh ? ah, but she had to. For the Chief of the Gamekeepers holding a great horseshoe magnet before him pointed it straight at each member of the company in succession.

And, when it pointed towards Ruthie she began to rise and rise, up from the ottoman on which she was sitting, and she couldn't help herself either.

"Ah ha ; ah ha ! Ruthie's got it ; Ruthie's got it," they all shouted.

In her novel position, Ruthie forgot all about the hard substance in her hand. "O, what have I got ?" she cried, "whooping cough, or mumps, or measles, or what ? Is it catching ?" for Ruthie's mamma was a very anxious mamma and her fear lest Ruthie should "catch something" was well known to that little maiden.

"Ho — no," they all cried, "the button, the button ! You've got the button !"

"O, have I ?" she said, still "sitting on nothing" above their heads. And then as the Chief of the Gamekeepers swayed and waved his magnet this way and that Ruthie floated through the air following the wave of the magnet. But all at once he raised the magnet high and held it motionless and then — pop ! out from Ruthie's hand flew the bright steel button straight to the horseshoe magnet while Ruthie as promptly dropped from her



NOT GOING TO RISE? AH, SHE HAD TO!

“ærial flight” plump into the golden side saddle on the goat’s back. But ever since that magnetic ride she declares that she knows just how it feels to be a bird and she says also, that “it’s perfectly lovely.”

After that they all sat in a circle and played “He can do Little that can’t do This,” with a gold-headed cane. But the squirrel would persist in rapping the goat’s clumsy hind-feet each time with the cane until the goat protested, “Well, you can’t do this again,” and threw the cane away in disgust. Then they tried “Malaga Raisins,” and Ruthie learned what had long perplexed her, that “Malaga Raisins are very good raisins,” because they are nice and fresh and juicy, but, then, “the Raisins of Smyrna are better,” because, “you see,” she said, “they were all put up in French candies and *glacé*.”

She felt real sorry for the poor little page whom the Chief of the Gamekeepers next made to stand up on a hassock in the centre of the room so that they could use him to play the three panes — “top, middle, or bottom.” He was selected because he had eaten so many of the raisins that he answered

very well ; " He did have three pains, you know," explained Ruthie, " a headache, a stomach-ache, and a corn on his little toe, and so we could play the game splendidly, but O, that poor little page did groan and squirm fearfully all the time ! "

As they were playing " Crossed or Uncrossed," the goat who had not forgotten how the squirrel had " caned " him, managed to pass the scissors so clumsily that he " jabbed " the squirrel in the leg with the sharp points. The squirrel shrieked with pain and scolded the goat in his frankest manner while passing the scissors on to his next neighbor, Queen Anne-who-sits-in-the-sun.

" Do I pass these scissors cross' or uncross' ? " he asked her, chopping off his syllables spitefully.

" Cross, decidedly ! " said Queen Anne-who-sits-in-the-sun. " You're the crossest squirrel that ever chattered," and she walked away from him.

As Ruthie put some court-plaster on his wound, the squirrel said, looking at the goat and Queen Anne-who-sits-in-the-sun, who stood a little way off, making fun of him, " H'm ! they think they're so smart, don't they ? "

“ Well, that’s the difference between you,” said Ruthie, pressing hard on the court-plaster to make



THEY TWIRLED HER AND TWIRLED HER.

it stick, “ they think they are so smart, and you think you smart so.”

“ O, O, Ruthie ! that’s the worst we ever heard ! ”

they shouted. "You must pay for that. Which will you do, twirl the platter or go to prison?"

"I think I'll twirl the platter, please, if it's all the same to you," Ruthie said rather guiltily.

"Well, then twirl away quick," said the Chief of the Gamekeepers, "because it's time to go," and the pages twined a silken scarf about her waist and made her hold a golden platter high above her head. Then three or four pages taking hold of each of the long ends of the scarf, twirled her and twirled her until she spun around and around like a teetotum. Soon the whole room seemed to whirl and spin and the first thing she knew the platter went flying out of her hands, she, followed by all the court, dizzy and dazed with so much twirling, went reeling and spinning out through the parlor door and so on down the great steps of the palace into the air and the sunshine.

CHAPTER V.

THE PICNIC ON DIXIE'S LAND.

GET aboard! get aboard!" shouted the Chief of the Gamekeepers as the whole party rushed down to the lakeside. Some fifteen or twenty feet from the shore a beautiful little steam yacht lay at anchor, but Ruthie could see no way of getting on board. So, when the Chief of the Gamekeepers called out, "Get aboard!" Ruthie said, greatly perplexed, "Oh, it's too far off, you know! I can't get aboard!"

"Well, if you can't get a board get a shingle," suggested the Eagle with the Golden Beak, Diamond Eyes, Silver Claws and Purple Feathers, as he hurried past her. "There's plenty of 'em around here."

And then Ruthie noticed that her companions were hastily stripping the boards of a high board-

fence near at hand and, launching these upon the lake, were floating off to the steam yacht ; so she followed suit and soon stood upon the deck.

“ Where are we going now ? ” she asked.

“ Why, where but to Dixie's Land to be sure,” answered the Four-Horned-Lady-always-Four-Horned. “ We are going there on a picnic, because Dixie's got a broken leg, you know, and we sha'n't run very much risk of getting caught.”

“ And where is Dixie's Land ? ” asked Ruthie.

“ Two blocks and a turn to the right, one block and two turns to the left, half-way 'round Robin Hood's Barn, and then across lots to the depot, and there it is, next door to Old Mammy Tipsey-toes,” the squirrel said very glibly.

Ruthie looked at him bewildered. “ My ! ” she said at last, “ what a curious direction. But you can't do that in a boat, can you ? ”

“ Why, of course not,” said the goat. “ That's the way you go by land ; but if you go by water it's just the other way. It lies just over there, you know,” and he swept the horizon rather vaguely with his horns.



"I AM NO ORATOR, AS THE SQUIRREL IS."

"But why do you go there on your picnic?" Ruthie persisted with her inquiries.

"Because Dixie doesn't want us," said the Blind-Man-in-Buff; "there wouldn't be any fun at the picnic if he did want us, you know. And now

that he's got a broken leg, why we can have lots of fun with him."

"And besides, we always have a picnic on Deck

Oration Day," explained the Gentle-Gentleman-always-Gentle.

"Oh, is this Decoration Day?" exclaimed Ruthie. "I'm sure I didn't know it."

"Well, well," said the squirrel, "then there is really *something* you don't know. Of course it's Deck Oration Day."

"Why, yes, Ruthie," Puss-in-the-Corner added, "you can see for yourself it's Deck Oration Day. There is the Chief of the Gamekeepers standing on the deck all ready to go on with his oration."



UP THE SMOKE-STACK.

Then everybody said "Hush, hush! Listen to the Orator of the Day," and the Chief of the Gamekeepers seating Ruthie at his side, took a drink of water, made a courtly bow and began :

Friends, No-Men, Hunkymen! Lend me your ears:—

[Here all his hearers looked troubled, and tried their ears to discover whether possibly they might be able to oblige the Chief of the Gamekeepers. The Eagle with the Golden Beak, Diamond Eyes, Silver Claws and Purple Feathers having no ears at all, immediately rose to express his regret that he could not oblige his honorable friend, when the Chief of the Gamekeepers seeing that he was misunderstood said hastily, "No, no; you did not understand me. My request was purely figurative." This explanation, although not exactly clear to them all, greatly relieved the company and the Chief of the Gamekeepers began again.]

Friends, No-Men, Hunkymen! Lend me your ears;

I come to welcome Ruthie, not to praise her.

The evil that girls do is precious little.

They're pretty good — we feel this in our bones.
So let it be with Ruthie. The frisky squirrel
Hath told you Ruthie was ambiguous —

[Here Ruthie looked at the squirrel rather indignantly, but the squirrel hastily climbed the smoke-stack and shook his head in denial. The Chief of the Gamekeepers waited for the excitement to subside and then went on.]

If it were so it were a grievous fault
And grievously she should be punished for it.
But, she can eat her three square meals a day,
From soup to coffee and yet grow not ill ;
Doth *this* in Ruthie seem ambiguous ?
Ambiguous girls are ever on the fence —
Yet doth the squirrel say she is ambiguous
And thinks his course an honorable plan.
Ye all did see that, when we played Parchesi,
I thrice did offer her the chance to win —
Which she did not refuse. Was this ambiguous ?
Yet doth the squirrel say she was ambiguous,
And, sure, he'll speak in honor — if he can.
But yesterday — and Ruthie went to school
With scarce an hour for play; now, she is here
And we are proud to do her reverence.

O, No-Men! if I were disposed to stir
Your hearts and minds with expectations sweet,
I should do Ruthie good, but Dixie wrong —
And Dixie hath a broken leg, you know.
I am no orator, as the squirrel is,
But, as you know, Chief of the Gamekeepers,
That love my friends and like to have some fun.
I tell you that which you yourselves do know,
Show you sweet Ruthie here and ask you all
To treat her just as I do. But, were I Dixie,
And Dixie Gamekeeper, there were a Dixie then
Would give you such a pic-nic here in Dixie's Land,
That every leaf should shake and dance with fun,
And every stone would rise in scrutiny.

Then the Chief of the Gamekeepers took another drink of water and sat down amid great applause, and Ruthie arose and bowed her thanks, and then they all applauded again and called out "Speech, speech!" But just then the squirrel shouted "Land ho!" and slid down the smoke-stack and the goat called out, "Passengers for Dixie's Land take the forward gangway!"

Ruthie still looked hurt as the squirrel sidled up to her, but he said, "Oh, say, that's all

nonsense, you know. He just wanted to make up a speech. I never said you were ambiguous."



THE WHOLE COURT RUSHED DOWN THE CARPETED PATHWAY.

"But what does it mean?" asked Ruthie, softening her look of displeasure.

"Ambiguous? I'm sure I don't know. Something like bilious, I guess," asserted the squirrel.

"But I don't care what it means; I *never* would

call girls names like that — no, not for anything. It would be real mean and I do hate anything mean," and then he darted off and pushed and crowded in front of the goat, so as to get the best place near the gangway.

A broad crimson carpet stretched from the dock up through the woods, and so on to a large golden castle that stood half-way up the hill. Up this carpeted walk marched the Chief of the Game-keepers, and all the court, while the scouts, and sharpshooters, and mounted archers went far in advance. And when they reached the castle, the scouts battered at the door, and the sharpshooters and the archers fired away at every window and loop-hole, while the whole court danced frantically on the flower-beds and on the strawberry vines, and wherever they saw the sign "Keep off the grass," and as they did so they shouted at the top of their voices :

I'm on Dixie's Land,
Dixie ain't at home ;
Dixie's got a broken leg,
And I've got none !

Then there came a growl and a grumble from the castle, the door burst open and, as the whole court rushed wildly down the carpeted pathway, Dixie the Ogre, with his leg all bandaged, came hobbling after, shaking his fist and wagging his head and shouting out :

“ Ho, ho ! Houf, houf ! I’m not at home, am I ? Ho, houf ! I’ve got a broken leg, have I ? Houf, ho ! Just wait till I catch you, that’s all ! ”

But no one seemed willing to wait and be caught, for the whole company came tearing and racing down to the dock, crowded over the gang-plank and into the yacht which steamed away just out of the reach of Dixie the Ogre, who stood up to his waist in the water shaking and shouting with rage.

“ Is *that* what you call a pic-nic ? ” asked Ruthie, as she sat panting and fanning in the cabin. “ Well, it’s the funniest pic-nic I ever saw. And why *do* you tease that poor old Mr. Dixie so ? ”

“ Tease him ! ” echoed the Four-Horned-Lady-always-Four-Horned. “ Why, we do it to please him.”

"Why, cert'nly," said the Governor of Copenhagen, "his life would be a burden to him here, if we didn't come and stir him up once in a while."

"He breaks his leg on purpose, you know," said the goat; and then they all sallied out again and swarmed up the carpet to the castle, and roused poor old Dixie again, and raced back to the steam yacht, and repeated this a dozen times until they were tired out. Then they steamed across to another island where lived Old Mammy Tipseytoes, and there they danced and shouted :

Old Mammy Tipseytoes !

Old Mammy Tipseytoes !

until they were hoarse, and worried the poor old woman until she rushed out after them with all her cats and dogs and drove them, laughing and shouting, away.

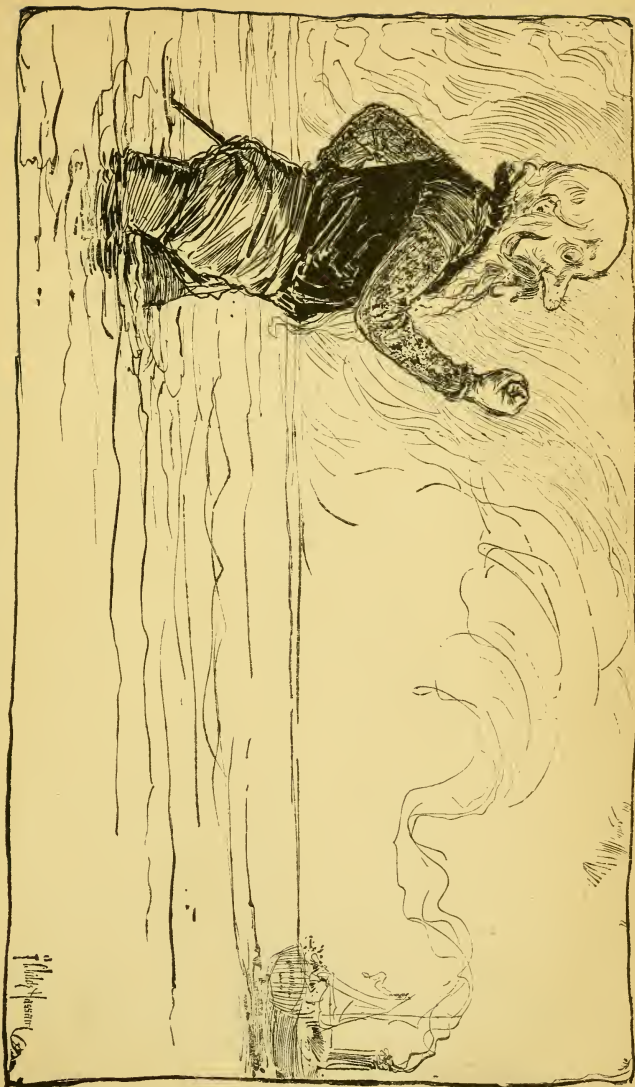
"But I wish we could have looked into Dixie the Ogre's castle," Ruthie said to little Jumping Joan as they sailed away after the last attempt to worry Old Mammy Tipseytoes.

"Do you?" asked little Jumping Joan. "Well,

so you can. It's easy enough, if you can take him by surprise. You come with me and we'll go in by the back door."

So, sure enough, while the steam yacht was anchored off Cape Lookout, near to that part of Dixie's Land, where they say the Coast is Clear, Ruthie and little Jumping Joan left the whole company "making skippers" with flat stones on the surface of the water and, hurrying around by a short cut, soon reached the back door of the great golden castle of Dixie the Ogre. In the door stood the cook. He was a fat old turkey with a long white apron and a great carving knife and, as the little girls followed him into his kitchen, he stood them both in a corner and felt of them in a business-like manner with his left wing. Little Jumping Joan he put to one side with the comment, "too wiry; not enough substance," but he looked Ruthie over with words of praise: "Ah, sweet and tender, sweet and tender!—Let me see, shall we have it roasted, with oyster dressing, or fricassed, with cream and onions?" and then he put on his eyeglasses and went to consult his

DIXIE THE OGRE STORMS WITH RAGE.



cookbook, when little Jumping Joan leaped on his back, bent his head down to his toes and skewered his wings to his drumsticks with his own rolling-pin ; then she threw his carving knife down the well and they both ran up the stairs, leaving the cook on the kitchen floor gobbling terribly.

They went swiftly up the castle stairs and all along the great hall, the floor of which was of mosaic work in chocolate creams, while the walls were of frosted cake with tracery of pink candy and the chandeliers of twisted peppermint candy and motto papers. Soon they came to a great door. This they opened softly and there they were in the golden sitting-room of Dixie the Ogre, which gleamed and glittered in the sunlight.

They peeped cautiously around and there, before a great bay window sat Dixie the Ogre, looking out upon the lake and shaking his cane at four of the pages, who had swum around from the steam yacht and were now bobbing up and down in the water and making horrible faces at poor old Dixie.

Then Rythie slipped up behind the chair in

which he sat with his broken leg propped up on a footrest and, clapping both hands over his eyes, she said merrily, "Guess who ! guess who !"

"Well—well!" he exclaimed, taken completely by surprise; "my gracious me! Houf—houf! I don't know, I'm sure! Who is it? Who are you?" And screwing his head around until he almost caught a stitch in his side and a "crick" in his back, he, at last, spied Ruthie's laughing eyes.

"Well—well—well! What d'ye mean, what d'ye mean?" he spluttered. "Why, bless my stars, it's Ruthie, isn't it?"

"Yes, sir," said Ruthie, dropping a pretty courtesy, while little Jumping Joan bowed and bobbed like a float on a fish-line.

Dixie the Ogre looked at Ruthie as if she made his mouth water.

"I wonder how you taste," he said, at length, drawing her towards him.

"Why, with my mouth, sir," Ruthie replied

"Houf, hum! no doubt, no doubt," he said, "but I mean, I wonder how you taste with—well, say with mint sauce and green peas."

"Sir?" exclaimed Ruthie, in some dismay.

"Or with capers," continued Dixie the Ogre, thoughtfully. "Yes, I think I should like you with capers. Now, what do you think about it — hum, ha?"

"Well, sir," answered Ruthie, carefully, "aunt Jo says she'd rather have me without any capers. She says they make me too much like a boy."

"O, they do, hey?" said Dixie the Ogre, pushing her away from him; "then I won't try them. Hum, houv! make you too much like a boy, do they? I hate boys. Ugh!" And he looked out of the window and shook his fist at the four pages who were now swimming back to the steam yacht. "Why, let me see," he said suddenly, taking Ruthie by the chin and turning her face up to his, "aren't you that Ruthie that took pity on poor little Gracie the other day when you were playing Dixie's Land?"

"Why, yes, sir," Ruthie replied modestly. "You see she was tired of being it all the time and I let her catch me so that she could have a chance at playing."

"I thought so, I thought so," said Dixie the Ogre. "Well, now I'll tell you," he added, musingly. "I'll let you off this time for being such a generous little girl, but you must do three things before I can let you go."

"I'll try, sir," said Ruthie.

"You see, my conscience is very tender," he explained, "and if I let you off without worrying you a little, why, my conscience will never give me any peace. Now you shall go free if you will do these three things for me: First, you must put yourself through the keyhole; second, you must run around the world in less than a minute; third, you must sing a song, speak a piece, or tell a story, on any subject I select. See — hay, hum, ha?"

"O — forfeit, forfeit; what fun!" said little Jumping Joan, delightedly.

"Hum, houf, hum — midget!" said Dixie the Ogre, glaring at little Jumping Joan and rubbing his broken leg; "who said anything about four feet, hey, hum, ha? Two feet are more than I can take care of. Come, go on, you," he said to Ruthie.

"Well, what was the first thing?" she asked.

"You were to put yourself through the keyhole," he replied.

"Please, sir, can you lend me a lead pencil?" asked Ruthie.

"A lead pencil! Why, bless my stars! What do you want of a lead pencil?" he asked, handing her one.

Ruthie took the pencil and wrote upon a slip of paper the word "*Yourself*" in her neatest hand, showed it to Dixie and then stuffed it through the keyhole, and courtesied to the Ogre.

"Hum, houf! Aren't you smart!" was his only comment.

"Now — the next, please," said Ruthie.

"Run around the world in less than a minute. Hey, hum, ha; that's not so easy, is it?" he added.

"Oh, that's easy enough," said Ruthie carelessly, as she took a copy of *The World* newspaper from Dixie's writing-table. Placing the newspaper on the floor, in the centre of the room, she ran rapidly around it twice, picked it up and handed

it to the astonished Dixie. "There, sir, that's done," she said, with another courtesy.

"Houf, houf," said Dixie the Ogre, too much surprised for further comment.

"Next?" asked Ruthie complacently.

"You were to sing a song, speak a piece, or tell



THE SAUCY PAGES DARE DIXIE.

a story, as I might select; now, repeat the poet Eightymoon's beautiful stanzas, beginning, 'shake, shake, shake;' and, remember, I'm very critical," he added.

Then Ruthie dropped into the regulation school position, made a little courtesy and began:

Shake, shake, shake,
With your cold, green fruit, O tree ;
And I would that my tongue could utter,
The thoughts that arise in me.

O, 'tis well with the fisherman's boy
Who came here with the mackerel to-day ;
O, 'tis well with the grocer's man
Who is calling there, over the way.

For their stomachs so strong, can stand
Green apples and never grow ill ;
But O, that my touch of the vanished fruit,
Always ends in a doctor's bill !

Shake, shake, shake,
To my feet all your fruit, O tree ;
I shall eat, though I know that the tempting taste,
Will end in a pain with me.

“Beautifully and touchingly rendered,” said Dixie the Ogre, applauding vigorously. “I must congratulate you on your delightful elocution even though I know that your success deprives me of a dish of roast Ruthie with mint sauce. Allow me to conduct you around the castle,” and, limping dread-

fully, but with excessive politeness, Ruthie's singular host showed her all his mansion — his furniture, his jewels, his treasure, and even his museum, containing his seven-league boots, the crowns of the twelve little Ogresses whom Hop O' My Thumb helped to destroy, and the copper boiler into which Jack crawled when he was hiding from the Ogre of the Beanstalk. Then, conducting them to the great golden door, he saw them down the staircase and bade them a courteous good-by, adding in evident regret as he patted Ruthie's plump cheeks, "Ah, it is such a sacrifice, such a sacrifice! I sha'n't get over this in a month. You must taste deliciously with capers, or with oyster dressing. Don't you think so — hey, hum, ha?"

But, when Ruthie and little Jumping Joan reached the spot where they had landed, behold, the yacht had steamed away and on a great oak-tree a paper was tacked on which they read :

"Gone to dinner. Will be back next year at half-past two. Please wait, or leave your name."

"What shall we do?" asked Ruthie in dismay.

"I don't know, I'm sure," answered little Jumping Joan. "I can't very well wait, you see, because I've got an engagement week after next that must be kept, and I can't leave my name, you know, because I may want to use it once in a while, and it *is* handy to have it with you."

"Handy to have what with you?" asked puzzled Ruthie.

"Why, your name, to be sure," said little Jumping Joan.

"But you can leave yours if you want to, though there is a great risk about it all the same."

"How so?" Ruthie inquired.

"Why, once on a time," said little Jumping Joan, "there was a boy left his name here, and



when he came back for it some one else had taken it; and as he didn't know himself when his name was gone, of course he got into trouble."

"Dear me," Ruthie said, greatly concerned, "what became of him?"

"Why, Dixie the Ogre came down here," little Jumping Joan explained, "and when he found the boy in such a pickle, he bottled him right up and put him away with the other relishes in the big preserve closet in the castle pantry."

"Then I am certain I sha'n't leave my name," said Ruthie. "But, where shall we go?"

"Well, if we can get across to Old Mammy Tipseytoes, we are all right," said little Jumping Joan. "But there is no boat here, and no fence where we can get a board, and the water is too deep to wade across. Now, if you only had your waterproof with you, or something of that sort, or even your overshoes, we might get over nicely."

Ruthie felt in all her pockets. "I haven't anything at all," she said, "except my sister Jenny's geometry that she left at Mollie's house the other

day and I am taking home to her. But we couldn't get over on a book, could we?"

"Geometry, eh?" said little Jumping Joan. "O, I'm afraid that's too heavy."

"I don't know though," said Ruthie, who had opened the book; "just hear what Jenny has written on the front leaf:

If there should be another flood,
Then quickly to this book I'll fly —
For, if all else should be engulfed,
Geometry would still be dry.

"That sounds promising," said little Jumping Joan. "I shouldn't wonder but that we might be able to use it. Let's try."

So Ruthie placed the geometry in the lake and, sure enough, it was so dry that it soon soaked up all the water in the little channel that separated Dixie's Land from Old Mammy Tipseytoe's island, and stepping confidently into the dry bed Ruthie and little Jumping Joan walked safely across to Old Mammy Tipseytoe's island, without so much as wetting even the soles of their shoes.

CHAPTER VI.

HOUSE OF THE TANGLED TALKERS.

PICKLES and cream! pickles and cream! here's your nice, hot pickles and cream!" were the first words that greeted Ruthie's ears as she and little Jumping Joan stepped upon the shore, and drew the Geometry after them. A piping little voice was calling out this singular combination and, turning around, Ruthie saw at her elbow just the smallest and funniest "darky boy" imaginable. He was dressed in a long white butcher's apron and baggy green Turkish trousers, and had a scarlet fez on his head. A great green and yellow basket hung on his arm and, again, as Ruthie looked at him, his shrill voice piped out, "Pickles and cream! pickles and cream! here's your nice hot pickles and cream!"

"Dear me," said Ruthie, "whoever heard of pickles and cream?"

The "darky boy" dropped his green and yellow basket. "Lend me that lead pencil you forgot to return to Dixie the Ogre," he said.

"Why, I declare, so I did," exclaimed Ruthie, handing it to him.

The "darky boy" took a letter from his pocket. Then he said, looking at Ruthie, "Well, *I've* heard of pickles and cream for one. I'll put that down," and he marked a big 1 on the back of the letter. "That's one, ain't it?" he asked.

"Yes," Ruthie assented.

"And — now you've heard of them, haven't you? That's another. Mark down one for Ruthie," and he showed her the two marks (11).

"And here's little Jumping Joan," he continued, "she's heard of it. Mark down one for little Jumping Joan." And he added another mark to his score and showed the letter to Ruthie with the three marks (111) upon it. "Now then," he said, "how many does that make? How many people have heard of pickles and cream?"

"Three, of course," Ruthie replied, confidently.

"Ho, go to school, go to school!" shouted the little "darkey boy" contemptuously, as he turned



THE VENDER OF "PICKLES AND CREAM."

a double somerset in the air and landed in his green and yellow basket. "Three, it is? ho, ho! It's a hundred and 'leven, isn't it? Go to school;

go to school !” and snatching the letter from perplexed Ruthie he picked up his green and yellow basket and called out, like a licensed vender : “ Pickles and cream ! pickles and cream ! Here’s your nice hot pickles and cream ! ”

“ But just think of it — pickles and cream ! ” Ruthie exclaimed, “ and hot at that. Dear me, don’t you get the stomach-ache with it ? ”

“ No, not any kind of cake,” said the “ darky boy ; ” and then he added, “ some folks do eat cocoa-nut cake with it I believe. Is the kind you mean as nice as that ? ”

“ Nice as what ? — the stomach-ache ? ” laughed Ruthie, “ why, that isn’t cake, it’s pain.”

“ Spain ? Where’s Spain ? ” he asked.

“ O — what an absurd boy ! ” exclaimed Ruthie. “ But, where are you going ? ”

“ Who — I ? Oh — why — I’m going to the tournament,” he replied.

“ The tournament ! ” said Ruthie ; “ what tournament ? Oh, I should so like to see a tournament ! I’ve heard my brother Paul read all about them.”

“ What in ? ” asked the “ darky boy.”

"What in?" echoed Ruthie, "why — Ivanhoe, you know."

"No, I didn't know it. Have you, though," said the "darky boy," looking around; "where is it?"

"Where's what?" asked Ruthie.

"Why, your hoe; I don't see it," he said.

"My hoe!" Ruthie exclaimed, and then laughing heartily she said, "Oh, no, no; that isn't it — it's a book!"

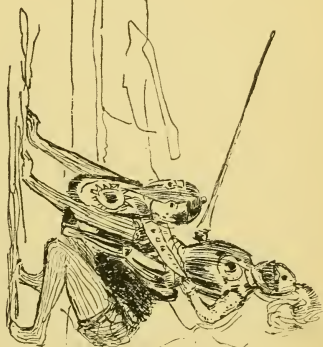
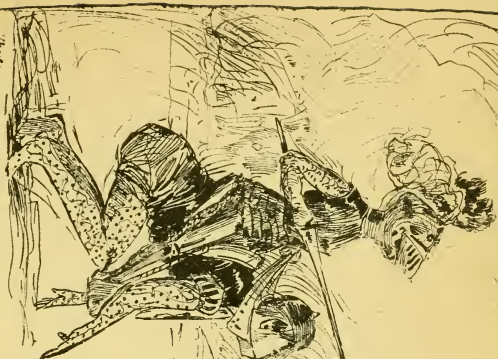
"Well, well, you are a nice one," said the "darky boy" disdainfully. "I don't believe you're a very smart girl for all your airs. Not to know the difference between a hoe and a book!"

"Oh, you goose!" was Ruthie's only reply. "But," she asked, "where is this tournament to be?"

"Why, right over there, behind old Mammy Tipseytoes' barn," he replied.

"And what's it all about?" Ruthie inquired.

"Sh! don't say anything," said the little "darky boy" mysteriously. "It's all about this letter" — showing her the letter on the back of which



he had marked the III. "They don't know that I've got it, and the Duke of Tisket and the Count of Tasket are going to fight about it. O — ho — ho!" And he stood on his head and waved his feet in the air for very delight.

Ruthie would have pursued her inquiries farther, but just then with a sweeping rush the whole court came hurrying past her and the little "darky boy" was lost in the crowd. The squirrel saw her and shouted, as he passed: "Hey O, Ruthie! Come on to the tournament!"

"Oh, well, but"—said Ruthie, somewhat undecided.

"Oh, come on; I can butt well enough; leave the butts to me," the goat exclaimed, as he caught Ruthie on his horns and tossed her high in air. Ruthie lost her breath a little, but quickly found it again as she landed lightly and comfortably upon the golden side saddle that was still strapped to the goat's back. Then she noticed that most of those who were on their way to the tournament were driving spirited little boys — singly, in span, tandem, and "pick-aback." The

Chief of the Gamekeepers dashed along in state, behind six prancing boys — three blondes and three brunettes — dressed in green velvet and harnessed with bright-colored reins, trimmed with tinkling silver bells.

When they drew up behind Old Mammy Tipsey-toes' barn, the entire company gathered around a great Brussels carpet, and the Chief of the Gamekeepers, having driven his six-in-hand twice around the circle, halted in the centre, doffed his bonnet, and declared the tournament "open." And, as he rode off, the squirrel, as herald, brilliant in a green and gold cloak and carrying a silver trumpet, skipped upon the carpet and announced that as the letter said to have been sent by the Chief of the Gamekeepers to Queen Anne-who-sits-in-the-Sun giving the answers to last week's conundrums had been lost, the noble Duke of Tisket and the valiant Count of Tasket would have the honor and glory of fighting for the inestimable privilege of escorting Queen Anne-who-sits-in-the-Sun on her search for the missing letter. With this the squirrel bowed himself out

of the circle and, mounted on two fiery little boys who pranced in upon their hands and knees, the Duke of Tisket and the Count of Tasket rode gallantly around the carpet. Then the squirrel sounded his trumpet, and with loud shouts of "a Tisket!" "a Tasket!" the two doughty champions lowered their lances and closed in mortal combat.

"But, say; what is it all about?" Ruthie asked the Chief of the Gamekeepers, for she had not quite got it straight in her mind. Then the whole court, turning towards her, sang in chorus:

A Tisket; a Tasket;
A green and yellow basket!
I sent a letter to my love,
And on my way I dropped it;
I dropped it; I dropped it; —

"Oh, I know where it is then!" burst out Ruthie; and springing into the circle, she parted the valiant knights who were hammering away at each other's helmets, grasped the Duke and the Count by their arms and sang loudly:

A little darky picked it up
And put it in his pocket —
His pocket ; his pocket ! —

“And see, there he goes — green and yellow basket, letter and all,” she added as she spied the “little darky” running for dear life across the Brussels carpet. Dropping the arms of the champions she dashed after the fugitive, followed by the Chief of the Gamekeepers, the Duke of Tisket and the Count of Tasket, the squirrel, the goat, the boy-horses and all the court. Around and around the circle she chased that little “darky boy,” but just as she had her hand almost on his shoulder he ducked his head and darted another way. She, trying to turn and follow him, tripped — and fell — down, down, down, until she landed in the Old Oaken Bucket at the bottom of a deep well.

As she stood in the bucket perplexed and panting she heard a dreadfully cracked and quavering voice above her call out, “Hel-lo be-low !”

“Oh, oh !” echoed Ruthie. “Please, sir, look here. I stand in the well !”

“How many feet deep ?” the voice inquired.



IN THE OLD OAKEN BUCKET.

"O — twenty-five I guess," said Ruthie at a venture.

"Who will you have to help you out?" again asked the voice.

"Why, you'll do as well as any one, I suppose," Ruthie answered.

So, creak, creak, creak went the bucket-rope, up and up slowly rose the bucket, and as Ruthie sprang joyfully over the well-curb with a hearty, "O, thank you, sir," the funny cracked voice said, "it was twenty-five, you know, miss."

"What was twenty-five?" Ruthie asked, and turned to look at her deliverer. He was the most crooked, bent and snarled-up little person she had ever seen. His nose turned one way and his chin another; his mouth was screwed into a funny little pucker; he was bandy-legged and knock-kneed and his clothes were what Ruthie had heard her grandmother define as "seven ways for Sunday," so rumpled and twisted were they; his high black hat was all bent and banged, and he had in his hand a cane that was as gnarly and crooked as a ram's horn.

"What was twenty-five?" repeated Ruthie, as this twisted-up little fellow looked at her rather sheepishly.

"Why, the well," he answered; "you said you stood twenty-five feet deep in the well — and, it's a kiss for every foot, you know."

"Oh, it's forfeit, is it?" laughed Ruthie. "Well, then — there's one kiss," she said dropping a hasty little one on the tip end of his particularly crooked left ear; "please charge the rest. But I'm much obliged to you for getting me out of that horrid well. And who are you, sir? You look as if you might be the Crooked Man."

"Why, of course; so I am," he replied, "and only just now I've

—walked a crooked mile,
And I've found a crooked sixpence
Against a crooked stile,

see, here it is," he said, showing her a piece of money bent nearly double.

I've got a crooked cat,
And she caught a crooked mouse —

he continued, and Ruthie finished the description:

“I know,” she said, “and you

all live together

In a little crooked house,

don't you now?”

“To be sure we do; to be sure we do,” replied the Crooked Man, highly flattered and nearly nodding his head off. “Why, you know me, don't you?”

“O, I've heard about you,” said Ruthie; “but where do you live? Where is your crooked house?”

“Just a crooked mile from here,” he responded, “next door to the House of the Tangled Talkers.”

“The House of the Tangled Talkers!” screamed Ruthie; “what a funny name. Why, who are the Tangled Talkers?”

“O, they're awfully smart people,” replied the Crooked Man. “They know everything under the sun from Timbuctoo to Trigonometry and they talk so wonderfully that nobody can understand them. O, it's just beautiful.”

"It must be," said Ruthie, charmed with his description. "Why, I must call on them."

"If I were you I'd ring the bell," said the Crooked Man. "They are so busy studying that perhaps they won't hear you if you just call on them, and then it's more polite too, you know. Go right over to their house. It's a crooked mile as I go, but as you can walk straight it's only a short path across the field. Good-by — but — ah — by the way," he added, hesitatingly, "I don't like to bother you — but when can I call for the rest of 'em — those — feet — ah — kisses, I mean?"

"O, next day after never," said Ruthie, as she jumped over the fence and ran across the field.

She soon found the house. There could be no mistake about it, and the big silver door-plate convinced her that she was right. It read :

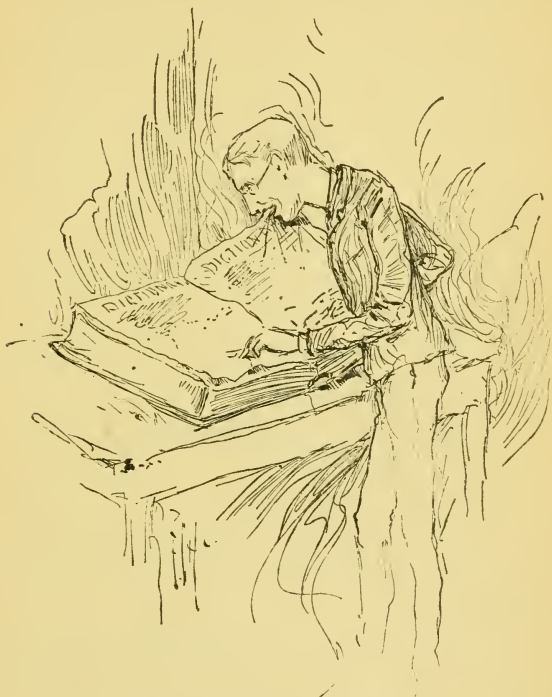
DRS. MANGLE & MIX,

COINERS OF WORDS AND DEALERS IN ASSORTED LANGUAGES.

Hog Latin and Tangled Talk a Specialty.

Only hesitating long enough to read this announcement and to think, "well that's the funniest door-plate I ever saw," Ruthie rang the bell.

Soon the door was opened by a queer little man, very round and fat. His clothes seemed to be all



SWALLOWING THE DICTIONARY.

wrong side out, his spectacles were on wrong side up, and he wore the blandest kind of a smile on the wrong side of his mouth.

“How-gry do-gry you-gry do-gry, my-gry de-gry?” he said, extending his hand.

Ruthie was delighted to feel that she too was a fluent speaker of the fascinating Hog Latin, and she replied in the same tongue:

“O-gry, I-gry am-gry qui-gry well-gry, I-gry than-gry you-gry;” then, looking at him she added, “you-gry ar-gry —?”

“Moctor Dangle, at sore yervice,” replied the little fat man with a low bow.

This was beyond Ruthie, so she simply said, “O,” and smiled sweetly.

“Wha-gry can-gry I-gry do-gry for-gry you-gry?” he inquired.

“O, I only came to call on you and look around,” said Ruthie falling back on the plain English for her reply.

“Howd to präve you, Riss Mūthie,” said her welcomer; and Ruthie, after studying the door-plate and his introduction of himself as “Moctor Dangle,” concluded that he must be Doctor Mangle, and that this was a sample of his “tangled talk.”

"Here is our rool schoom," he said, opening a door at his right. The "rool schoom" was a large apartment in which were a number of boys and girls variously employed in writing and studying. Ruthie's attention was first attracted to a party of boys who were pulling what seemed to be a long snake, out of a rat hole.

She learned however that they were merely drawing out the meaning of a peculiarly slippery sentence. Another group seemed to be twisting or braiding a long string of something like molasses candy, and Ruthie thought she would be able to have some fun at a candy pull; but Doctor Mangle explained that these scholars were engaged in twisting the English language to suit their purposes, and he likewise assured her that they very soon learned to twist it and turn it so beautifully that no one could understand them.

Then Doctor Mangle beckoned to a girl of about Ruthie's size and said to her, "Ring for Sūthie," and the obliging little miss, with a neat courtesy, sung to a familiar air :

Rightly lo, rightly lo,
O'er gle thassy gaves we wo;
Gloothly smide, gloothly smide,
On the tilent side.
Wet le thinds and borters we,
Moonful in tear thelody,
Fling and soat, fling and soat,
In our bittle loat.

Ruthie thanked her for the song, although she thought the words sounded queerly.

Doctor Mangle next showed Ruthie the laboratory, and peeping through a glass door she saw a little wizened-up person, just the reverse of Doctor Mangle, who was mixing and stirring furiously in a great saucepan. This, Doctor Mangle told her, was "Moctor Dix, woining curds."

Ruthie had not the slightest idea what this occupation could be. "Perhaps it's pudding," she thought, but she soon found that he had a great bin full of letters—like "logomachy" or "word-making"—and that he was mixing these letters for the purpose of coining words to suit the needs of his advanced pupils.

Next to Doctor Mix stood a boy who took a quantity of the loose letters and spreading them upon a board before him combined them into all sorts of fantastic forms. To Ruthie's inquiry, Doctor Mangle explained that this boy was a Spelling Deformer. Then he spoke to Ruthie in a loud voice : " Spell colonel ! "

" C-o-l-o-n-e-l," Ruthie promptly responded.

Then turning to the boy, he said, " Spell vernal ! "

And the Spelling Deformer as promptly responded, " v-o-l-o-n-e-l."

" O, O, that's dreadfully wrong," said Ruthie ; but Doctor Mangle assured her that it was right according to the Spelling Deformer's book, and then he requested him to write out for Ruthie " The Song of the Plough," and the boy, turning to the blackboard, spelled out in large letters, the following singular composition :

THE SONG OF THE PLOUGH.

'Tis the Song of the Plough !

Hough the cough

Seeks the bough

As it shadows the gleaming furrough ;

Though the farmer may sough
He will knough his fough
And the crough lieth lough on the morrough.
The old horse at the trough
Breaks ough his cough
And the rabbit seeks his borrough;
While the tough green stough
O'er the rocks so rough
Hides the signs of the wintry sorrough.*

Ruthie tried hard to read it but gave up at last in despair. "Why, it's awful nonsense," she said.

"Nonsense?" exclaimed Doctor Mangle,
"Suthie, you're roopid!"

* Ruthie's final translation of this "Song of the Plough" gave this:

'Tis the Song of the Plough!
How the cow
Seeks the bough
As it shadows the gleaming furrow;
Though the farmer may sow
He will know his foe
And the crow lieth low on the morrow.
The old horse at the trough
Breaks off his cough
And the rabbit seeks his burrow,
While the tough green stuff
O'er the rocks so rough
Hides the signs of the wintry sorrow.



THE THREE WISE MEN OF GOTHAM.

And Doctor Mix who had overheard her remark held up his hands in horrified silence.

So Ruthie turned from them in silent contempt, and walked slowly towards a long, lank boy who at a table in the corner was tearing the leaves from a great book, with his teeth, and swallowing them greedily.

"O, what is this boy doing, please?" she inquired.

"Dollowing the swictionary," said Doctor Mangle, briefly, as he put his hand affectionately on the boy's head and requested him to "expatiate his exordium and peroration for Ruthie."

"O, no, don't," said Ruthie in some alarm; "it might go off and hurt somebody."

The long, lank boy merely looked at her in dire disgust and, rising, repeated in pompous tones:

Infinitesimal particles of saline humective fluidity,
Minute corpuscles of non-cohering inorganic matter,
Conjointly cause to exist the immeasurable expanse of aque-
ous section.

And the resplendent superficial area of dry solidity.

“For gracious sakes, whatever is he talking about?” asked Ruthie, almost overpowered by the volume of hard words. Then, looking over his shoulder, she exclaimed, “Why, I do declare, if this boy hasn’t been swallowing the dictionary and now he’s trying to recite :

Little drops of water,
Little grains of sand,
Make the mighty ocean,
And the beauteous land.

At this moment the door opened and in walked the Three Wise Men of Gotham. Ruthie knew them at once — clothes, books, instruments, spectacles and all, and wasn’t surprised to see through the window, a great China punch-bowl bobbing about unsteadily in the lake before the house.

The Three Wise Men of Gotham solemnly shook hands with the two Professors of Tangled Talk, and then proceeded to examine the school. Such questions and answers Ruthie had never heard before, and she said, when she tried to remember them afterwards, that she never could tell whether the

questions were the answers, or the answers the questions — or, as she expressed it, “it was so mixy-muxy that I always thought the answers were questioning the questions or that the questions were answering the answers,” which shows what a glorious tangle it all was.

At last when the Three Wise Men of Gotham, glaring at her through three pair of spectacles, asked her if she understood Botany and requested her to go into the garden and dig up for them some Latin and Sanskrit roots Ruthie could stand it no longer. Springing to her feet she seized Doctors Mangle and Mix and tied them firmly together with the very string of sentences that their pupils had been twisting. Then she turned on the Three Wise Men of Gotham and drove them to their wobbly and bobbily bowl and pushed it out to sea. This done she darted back into the schoolroom and sang to the astonished scholars :

Boys and girls come out to play,
Where the sun shines brightly 'tis ever day,
Leave your studies to stew and steep,
And prance with me, dance with me, into the street.

Come with a whoop and come with a call,
Come with a good will or come not at all,
Up the ladder and down the wall,
Trip with me, skip with me, one and all !

There was no resisting Ruthie's jolly appeal. Out with a rush trooped all the boys and girls. Only the two tied-up Professors, the Spelling Deformer and the boy who had swallowed the Dictionary were left in the House of the Tangled Talkers — too top-heavy to move.

But the liberated boys and girls — O, how happy they were ! With a whoop and a call, up the ladder, down the wall, here, there, and everywhere, they raced and chased and tumbled in a glorious game of Tag, while Ruthie led them on with laughter and with glee.

And so, off and away, across the pleasant fields and under the smiling sky, Ruthie and the children escaped from the House of the Tangled Talkers.

CHAPTER VII.

LITTLE SALLIE WATERS.

I THINK," said little Jumping Joan (for the next thing Ruthie knew, there she was back again with all her old acquaintances in the Throne-Room of the palace), "I think it must be high time to go to Rome."

"Yes, yes, high time," said the squirrel, looking up at the clock.

"Why, what time is it?" Ruthie asked — her ideas of time having become sadly disarranged during her visit to No-Man's Land.

"Why," said the goat, "can't you see for yourself — it's half-past kissing time and time to kiss again."

"And, O dear!" exclaimed Ruthie in dismay, "here comes that horrid Crooked Man after the second of his twenty-five kisses."

"Pooh! we'll make short work with him," said the goat, and rushing across the room with lowered head he charged against that unlucky Crooked Man and butted him through the doorway. Ruthie listened with interest and, sure enough, she soon heard her tormentor going bumpity-bump down the palace stairs.

"Well, well," she said to the goat, as she hugged him gratefully, "you are the very best butter I ever saw."

"This quality fifty cents a pound!" the goat remarked, striking an attitude. "Well, I'm grateful I'm not oleomargarine."

"Come, come," said the squirrel, "stop this nonsense. It really is time to start if we are going to Rome."

"O, how are you going?" asked Ruthie, greatly interested in the proposed trip.

"How? Why, on foot, of course," replied the squirrel.

"My! going to Rome on foot—all the way?" exclaimed Ruthie, "won't that be dreadfully tiresome?"

"O, it isn't far," explained little Jumping Joan, "we're only going to roam around the chairs here."

"O," said Ruthie, seeing the point, "you are going to r-o-a-m and not to R-o-m-e."

"Why, of course," said the squirrel. "But say—" he continued, "do you often have such spells as that? 'Cause if you do, we'll have to have a doctor handy."

Ruthie paid no attention to this flippant remark,

but turned to the Chief of the Gamekeepers who said, "Come, boys, fix the chairs;" and the pages



STILL RUTHIE AND THE SQUIRREL
CIRCLED.

hurrying forward pushed and rolled all the chairs into the centre of the floor and arranged them in a long row, side by side, but facing, alternately, in different directions. Then when all was ready the Three Fiddlers of Old King Cole took their stand in the music gallery and played a lively air, while the whole court, just one more in number than the seats, skipped around the single file of chairs. Suddenly the music would stop and down every one would plump into the nearest chair, while the guards would drag away the unfortunate who failed to get a seat and thrust him or her into the great ice chest. "Because," explained little Jumping Joan, as the Genteel-Gentleman-always-Genteel was thus dragged away, "he's left out in the cold, you know." When a chair too had been rolled away and the players and chairs thus each reduced by one, the music would begin again, and the march go on until the next halt and scramble.

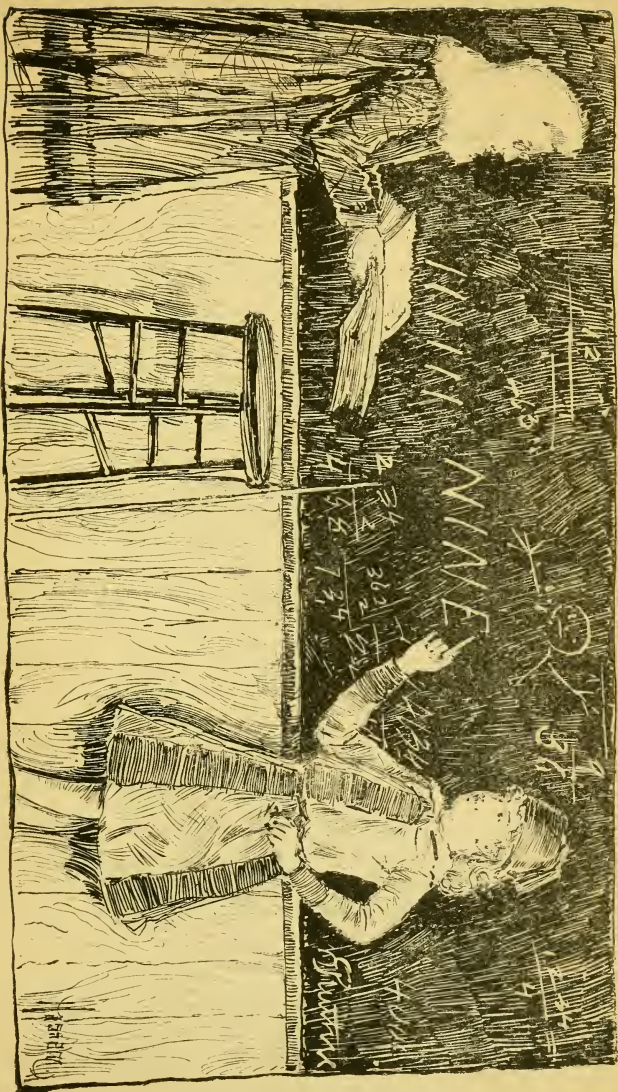
So it continued until only one chair remained, around which Ruthie and the squirrel cautiously revolved, while all the defeated players clamored to be released from the ice chest. But, still the

fiddlers played, and still Ruthie and the squirrel circled, until even the chair itself became disgusted and coolly rolled away. Then the music suddenly ceased and Ruthie immediately sat down upon the floor, where the chair had been, while the squirrel plumped himself into Ruthie's lap. Both, of course, claimed the game, but as it was hard to decide whether the floor or Ruthie represented the chair that rolled away it was not easy to say which was victor. So the Chief of the Gamekeepers referred the matter to the court lawyers, who immediately went into the law library to consult authorities and endeavor to give a decision.

And while they were waiting for this verdict who should roll into the centre of the room but the chairs themselves and demand to have their share in the game. "Turn and turn about is fair play," said the old arm-chair, and the piano-stools stated that they also had "revolved the matter over and come to the conclusion that one good turn deserves another;" all the chairs in fact agreed unanimously that if they were always to be sat upon by every-

body, it was only a fair division of labor to give them a chance to sit on somebody in return.

The Chief of the Gamekeepers acknowledged the justice of their petition and, at once, the whole court ranged itself in single file up and down the room, each person facing in an opposite direction from his neighbor while the chairs — high, straight backs, arm, easy, and all, marched around and around. Whenever the music stopped the chairs would at once drop into the laps of the children and so this singular game went on until only a giddy revolving-chair and a Brussels-carpeted camp-chair fought for the last seat in Ruthie's lap. But the revolving-chair was successful and received the congratulations of all the rest of the furniture, and when the camp-chair seemed inclined to dispute the matter every chair in the room cried out "O, you shut up!" It was, certainly, the most singular game that Ruthie had ever taken part in, and when at last it was all over she found out that she also was all over bruises, and was so stiff and sore from having so many chairs, big and little, sitting down on her,



RUTHIE AND THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE.



that she had to take a good bath in Pond's Extract to get out the soreness. "Why," she explained afterwards, "I was as full of pains as a conservatory."

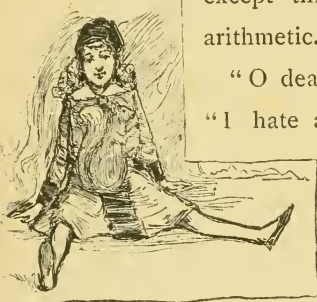
After her bath, and when every one had rested from the labor and exertion of going to Rome, in came the lawyers to whom had been referred the question as to whether Ruthie or the squirrel had won the game. They reported that they had been unable to arrive at a conclusion and had decided to leave the settlement of the matter entirely to the Lord Chief Justice. The Lord Chief Justice arose, and putting on his wig hind-side-before, he commanded Ruthie and the squirrel to stand before him.

"This is a very difficult question," said the Lord Chief Justice solemnly. "There being no chair to sit upon did the floor represent the chair, or did Ruthie? If Ruthie is a chair what kind of a chair is she?" (Here one of the pages slyly suggested an un-easy chair, but was frowned upon by the Lord Chief Justice and led off by the ear by one of the guards.) "The only authority that throws any

light upon the question," continued the Lord Chief Justice, "is found in the decision of Captain John Bunsby. I will read it to you." Then the Lord Chief Justice opened a great volume and said, "Captain Bunsby's decision is as follows: 'For why? which way? If so, why not? Therefore!'" shutting the book, he said, "so you see according to this authority no decision as to which of you

won the game can be reached except through the test by arithmetic."

"O dear," thought Ruthie, "I hate arithmetic. If I've



got to do sums here I might as well be at school."

RUTHIE IMMEDIATELY SAT DOWN.

"Now," said the Lord Chief Justice, with a stern, triumphant air, "take each a piece of chalk and put six marks on the blackboard."

Ruthie and the squirrel walked up to the blackboard and made the six marks (| | | | | |).

"Now," said the Lord Chief Justice, "to those six marks add five more so as to make nine."

The squirrel and Ruthie looked at each other in dismay.

"It can't be done," the squirrel shouted in a huff, as he threw his chalk at the Lord Chief Justice and hit him on the nose. "Any goose knows that six and five are eleven; you'd better go to school."

But Ruthie was not so rash. She remembered the little "darky boy," and his question in arithmetic, and she bit her chalk thoughtfully.

"O, I know! I know!" she exclaimed at last. "Add five to six and make nine, is it? Well, I'll add to the six straight marks two slanting ones (\ \), and three parallel ones (\equiv), and there you are: **NINE.**"

Then everybody shouted "Hurrah for Ruthie! she's champion! she's champion!" And she and the goat waltzed four times around the Throne Room while the Three Fiddlers almost broke their fiddle-strings, they played so fast and furiously.

As they danced down the palace stairs and out

into the broad, bright sunshine, Ruthie heard a chorus of girlish voices: "My! did you ever? she's at it again!"

"Who's at it again?" Ruthie asked.

"Why, little Sallie Waters," was the reply.

"What is she doing?" inquired Ruthie.

"What? why — crying, of course. What else does Sallie Waters ever do?" the maidens responded scornfully.

"Well, but what is she crying for?" asked Ruthie.

"Why — don't you know?" they exclaimed; "we thought everybody knew that!" And then they all laughed and giggled, and, dancing up to Ruthie, they whispered: "Why, say, Ruthie — she's crying for a beau."

"A bow?" queried Ruthie, curiously. "Why, what does she want to shoot? O — do you have archery here?"

"O, no, no, no," laughed all the little maidens; "she wants a beau, you know; not a b-o-w, but a b-e-a-u."

"O!" exclaimed Ruthie, now beginning to under-

stand the affair; "the little goose! Well, why does she cry for one? Why don't she laugh for him — or laugh *at* him — that's the best way?"

"Why, she don't know how to laugh; she's always crying," answered Ruthie's companions. "When she hasn't got a beau, she cries for sorrow; when she does get one, she cries for joy and when she loses him — she always loses him — why then she cries, of course. And so we call her 'Cry Baby Cripsy.'"

"Well, where is she?" asked Ruthie.

"Come along, we'll show you," they said; and racing across the palace lawn, they came to a rustic summer-house so covered with climbing roses and trumpet vines and Virginia creepers that Ruthie was just thinking what a beautiful little place it was, when the girls all said "Sh! sh!" and put their fingers to their lips. Soon Ruthie heard — *sob, sob, sob; sob, sob, sob!* coming from the pretty summer-house. She parted the vines and peeping in she saw, upon the floor of the summer-house, the most doleful little damsel sitting in a dismal little heap. The tears were flowing so fast

from her eyes that they made two little rills and two little pools on the summer-house floor. "But it's an ill wind that blows no one any good," thought Ruthie, for, looking at the little lakes of tears, she saw that in one of them six mosquitoes were having a jolly sailing excursion on a rose leaf, while in the other lake fourteen daring ants had made a raft of straws and hoisting a trumpet flower as their blood red flag were fearlessly pushing out to sea and singing "A Life on the Ocean Wave!"

But Ruthie was not permitted to gaze long on this scene of mingled sorrow and joy. For she found her hands grasped by two of the little girls, and then the whole ring of teasing maidens danced around and around the summer-house, singing at the top of their voices :

Little Sallie Waters,
A-sitting in the sun,
A-crying, a-weeping
For a young man.

And little Sallie Waters' tears streamed down so

much harder as she heard these words that the lakes of tears grew boisterous and billowy, and the mosquitoes fled from their rose-leaf in dismay, while six of the fourteen pirate ants were swept from their raft and perished in the breakers.

But now the little singers changed their tone and sang encouragingly :

Rise, Sallie, rise !
Wipe out your eyes !

And a dozen dainty handkerchiefs fluttered into the summer-house and made little dry

dabs at poor Sallie's eyes, which seemed to be almost cried out from her grief and sorrow. Again :



LITTLE SALLIE WATERS.

Fly to the East, fly to the West,
Fly to the very one that you love best !

Up jumped little Sallie Waters when she heard these words and in great haste rushed from the summer-house. She turned first this way and then that, and, taking a pair of opera glasses from her pocket, looked anxiously all around. Finally, away off towards the sunset she saw what looked to Ruthie like a lot of black specks, but which were evidently boys; for, with a cry of joy, away darted little Sallie Waters towards one particular black speck, while Ruthie and all the little maidens followed close at her heels singing merrily in chorus :

Flee, flee !

Over the lea,

Over the lea so bonny,

Little Sallie Waters,

Dolefulest of daughters,

Races and chases for Johnny.

Flee, flee !

Over the lea,

Over the lea so bonny,

Sallie may go,

But — O, dear, O !

My ! — don't we pity poor Johnny !

And, sure enough, when Ruthie came up to what had seemed but little black specks, and which



AWAY DARTED LITTLE SALLIE WATERS.

proved to be boys, there was little Sallie Waters by the side of poor Johnny and crying as she clung to his arm — just as the little girls had said. And

all the rest of the boys were standing around with their faces covered with the biggest kind of grins while, as for poor Johnny — well, he didn't seem over-pleased, Ruthie thought, for he looked rather "sheepish" and tried to break away and kept saying, "O say, quit that, won't you?" or "What did you come and break up the game for?" adding "Girls are awful nuisances — sometimes!" and so on and so forth.

Just at this stage of affairs, with a rush and a scramble, the goat and the squirrel came galloping past on a search for Ruthie. As they passed the group at full speed the squirrel saw her and shouted out, "Hey, there she is! gee there, old fellow!" and he seized the goat's horns and twisted him around in Ruthie's direction. The goat saw her also and dashed towards her, but with so much force that he couldn't stop himself in time, and the first thing poor Johnny knew, the goat had butted in to him, and he lay sprawling and kicking on the ground while little Sallie Waters, tossed high in the air by the horns of the goat,

landed in a currant bush near by where she hung crying for help.

“O, you *bad* goat,” said Ruthie, as she picked



CAUGHT IN THE CURRANT BUSH.

little Sallie Waters off the currant bush. “Why will you be so rash and hasty?”

“Tasty, am I?” said the goat, “well that’s why I like you;” and as he picked up sprawling little Johnny and set him on his feet, he said, “come,

Johnny, don't lay there and bawl; pick up your bat and ball and — hello, look out! here comes little Sallie Waters!"

Johnny waited to hear no more, but with a look of terror fled from little Sallie Waters while she deserted thus sat herself down on the ground and began to cry harder than ever.

The grinning little boys followed Johnny with whoops and shouts, but the teasing little girls joined hands and, as before, danced 'round and 'round the weeping damsel, singing as they danced.

But Sallie refused to rise, refused to be comforted, refused to fly to the east, or to the west, and Ruthie, greatly alarmed lest she should cry her eyes out entirely, telephoned for an ambulance and, harnessing the goat to it, placed the weeping Sallie in the ambulance and drove slowly back to the palace where she sought out the Chief of the Game-keepers and begged him to send little Sallie Waters to the Hospital for Incurables.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW THEY CAME TO LONDON BRIDGE.

AS Ruthie tripped down the palace steps with that sweetly satisfied feeling that comes to every one of us children, young or old, when we feel that we have done a virtuous action, she spied the squirrel curled up in one corner. A large memorandum pad was on his lap and he was writing furiously, tearing off sheet after sheet as soon as filled and stuffing them into his hat.

“O dear, O dear!” she heard him say, “there’ll be trouble, there’ll be trouble — I know there will!”

“Why, whatever is the matter?” Ruthie asked.

The squirrel looked at her an instant and then, quickly uncurling himself, he clutched her by the hand.

“O, here,” he said, “you’ll do as well as any one. Can you swear?”

"Why — the idea!" Ruthie exclaimed, snatching her hand away. "What a question! What do you mean by asking me that! Of course I don't swear! girls never do."

The squirrel pulled his whiskers in dismay.

"O, of course not; of course not," he said pettishly. "No one about this court does. And it is most important that I should find some one who can swear — most important."

"But why is it so important?" Ruthie inquired. "Why need any one do such an awfully wicked thing as swear for you?"

"O — why — why — why! always why!" said the squirrel snappishly. "I never saw such a girl as you in all my life; you always must know the why of everything. I declare, when I have more time I shall call you the walking question-mark! Just now I'm too busy. Why do I want you, or any one, to swear? Well, because I am making my will and it must be sworn to before it's good for anything."

"Your will!" said Ruthie.

"Yes — my will," the squirrel repeated, "my

last will and testament. See here," and he hunted rapidly through his papers, "ah, here it is — hark: 'I give and bequeath to Ruthie all the empty nutshells she can find in the oak-tree by the barn and also my forgiveness for her thoughtlessness in treading on my tail.' "

"How ridiculous," said Ruthie; "but what is the matter — what do you want to make your will for? You're not likely to die just yet, are you?"

"O, my digestion is good enough," said the squirrel, "but it's worse than that; there's danger ahead and I must be prepared for the worst."

"Danger ahead?" said Ruthie, "why, what do you mean?"

"What do I mean?" echoed the squirrel; "why — haven't you heard the news?"

"What news?" Ruthie inquired.

"Why, King George and his troops are on their way to London Bridge," said the squirrel impressively.

"Well — suppose they are," said Ruthie.

"O dear, O dear — 'suppose they are,' she says; now did ever any one hear such an unreasonable

girl? Ah — you don't know King George" — and the squirrel shook his head solemnly.

"Who is King George?" Ruthie inquired.

The squirrel simply gasped in speechless amazement to think that there should live a girl who could ask, "Who is King George?"

"Let me see," Ruthie said musingly, "I've studied in my history about King George. He was king of England you know at the time of the American Revolution, and" —

"O, American fiddlestick!" petulantly exclaimed the squirrel; "why, he couldn't hold a candle in ferocity to the King George I mean."

"Well do please tell me what King George you mean?" asked Ruthie pleadingly.

"Why, who should I mean, but the great and terrible King George — sometimes called Georgy Porgy, King of the Bandits," said the squirrel impressively.

"What — do you mean 'Georgy Porgy, Pudding and Pie?'" Ruthie inquired laughing.

"Yes — yes," answered the squirrel, "and let me tell you, young woman, it's no laughing matter.

If he once gets hold of you, you'll laugh the other side of your mouth. Why, he dashes down here every once in a while ; marches across London



HE WAS WRITING FURIOUSLY.

Bridge, orders the gates to open and then the Chief of the Gamekeepers has to send all the girls in the city out to him and as they pass through the city gates that terrible Georgy Porgy

—kisses every one of them, no matter how hard they beg and cry ! ”

“ Well,” said Ruthie, after a little reflection, “ I don’t see anything so very terrible in all that.”

“ What !! ” the squirrel exclaimed in amazement ; “ you don’t see anything terrible in all that ? Well, you’ll have a chance, Miss Ruthie, for the Chief of the Gamekeepers has news that King George and all his troops are on the march to London Bridge and we can expect his herald

any moment to order the gates to open and the girls to file out before him."

"And do you mean to say that you intend to obey him?" Ruthie asked.

"Why, what else can we do?" said the squirrel. "I tell you he's more ferocious than the Robber Kitten, for he'll

Shoot you through and stab you too
And kill you which is worse,
Worse, worse,
And kill you which is worse.

"Did he *ever* kill any one?" asked Ruthie.

"O no," said the squirrel; "we are careful never to give him the chance; but he would, just as quick as wink."

"Never killed any one; never did anything but just kiss the girls?" Ruthie continued, questioning him.

"No; but isn't that bad enough?" inquired the squirrel.

"Well," said Ruthie, "it might be worse. At any rate, I'll try it," she continued thoughtfully.

"Try it — try what?" asked the squirrel.

"Ask me no questions and I'll tell you no lies," Ruthie replied. "Just wait a bit — you'll see," and she walked thoughtfully back into the palace.

Soon after the great crimson and purple flag was run up on the staff on the dome of the palace; the trumpets sounded, and all the royal army came marching into the square. Then the Chief of the Gamekeepers, standing on the balcony of the palace announced to the army and the people that King George and his troops were marching to London Bridge, but that Ruthie had volunteered to meet the robber-king and to try to drive him back. When this news was told a great shout went up, three times three cheers for Ruthie were given with a will, and then the whole army with the Chief of the Gamekeepers and Ruthie at the head, and the court following in the rear, marched forward to meet King George and his troops at London Bridge.

Ruthie, who rode her trusty goat, was dressed in a pretty white muslin suit and carried a crimson and silver jumping-rope in her hands.

"Which is the way to London Bridge?" she asked the Chief of the Gamekeepers.

"There's a toll-gate just ahead here," he replied; "it is kept by See-Saw Jack. We will ask him."

Soon they arrived at a low osage hedge, stretching

directly across the road, and in an opening in the centre their progress was barred by a see-saw plank laid across a big log, and on one end of the see-saw sat a funny little dirty-faced boy. The squirrel, as herald, sprang upon the other end of the see-saw,



THE COURT POET.

shook out his flag of truce and, sounding his trumpet, said,

See-Saw Jack in the hedge,

Which is the way to London Bridge?

Up and down, up and down, went the see-saw, fast and furiously, and then the dirty-faced little



LITTLE JUMPING-JOAN DASHES ACROSS THE BRIDGE.

boy at the other end stood on his head, waved his bare feet in the air and answered :

One foot up, the other down,
That's the way to London Town.

At this reply the squirrel leaped off his end of the see-saw so quickly that See-Saw Jack went sprawling off the plank and lay kicking and shouting for toll in the thick osage hedge.

"It's the fortune of war," said the squirrel carelessly, and then the whole army marched over the see-saw plank and, cheered by the easy direction given them by See-Saw Jack, marched briskly forward to London Bridge.

But as they came in sight of the bridge, which was really nothing but a stout plank laid across a narrow and shallow stream, there was seen a great flurry of dust ahead and, behold ! there came riding up to them in great state, under a flag of truce, King George's herald. He was a pompous little old Pterodactyl — "a kind of a bat and a kind of a chicken and a kind of a lizard," Ruthie described him afterwards. He rode a pink and green Phœ-

nix, and wore a long crimson cloak fringed with opossum tails, while twenty small boys, mounted on hobby-horse sticks, rode with him as imposing escort. As they approached the army of the Chief of the Gamekeepers, the Pterodactyl blew a trumpet blast and called out in a loud but squeaky voice :

What ho, there ! stand !

Ye timorous band.

Stand back and clear the way !

King George the Great

Sends me in state

Thus to your Chief to say :

O ! O !! O !!!

Open the gates as high as the sky

And let King George and his troops pass by.

The Chief of the Gamekeepers looked perplexed, the squirrel trembled violently and whispered,

“You’d better give in !” but Ruthie, standing erect, with one foot in her stirrup and one on the goat’s back, pointed her finger at the important herald and asked haughtily :

“Who is this — creature?”

“Creature! creature, indeed! creature yourself!” shrieked the Pterodactyl in a towering rage.

“O Ruthie, hush, hush!” said the squirrel seizing her bridle in dismay. “Don’t speak so rashly. This is the Right Honorable Pterodactyl, the royal herald of King George.”

“The Ter-o-which-til?” Ruthie inquired in wonder.

“The Pterodactyl,” said the squirrel, “and riding, too, on the pink and green Phœnix. Do be careful!”

“O, indeed!” exclaimed Ruthie, scornfully. “A Pterodactyl and a Phœnix! H’m — I know all about them, for I’ve studied about them in school. That,” she continued, pointing to the Phœnix, “is a myth. And he,” pointing to the Pterodactyl, “doesn’t exist any longer. He belongs to an extinct species. Do you suppose I am afraid of a myth and a monstrosity? You might as well be afraid of a mummy. Stand aside, sir,” and spurring the goat forward she seized the Phœnix by the

ear, whirled him around and said to the herald of
the mighty King George,

Go back to your master,
You old fossil black-bill !
You slightly,
Unsightly,
Extinct Pterodactyl !
Go back to your master
And tell him, I pray,

That the Chief of the Gamekeepers blocks up the way,
And give him this warning, you monster uncouthy,
Which the Chief of the Gamekeepers sends him through
Ruthie :

O ! O !! O !!!

‘ Hark, hark, the dogs do bark,
The beggars are coming to town.
Some in rags, and some in tags,
And some in velvet gowns.
We used to give them white bread,
We used to give them brown,
But Ruthie carries this good horse-whip,
To whip them out of town ! ’

And with that she gave the Phoenix such a smart
cut with her riding-whip that he and the pompous
old Pterodactyl went flying back at a furious rate,

while the twenty small boys followed after howling with dismay.

As soon as the Pterodactyl was fairly out of sight, the squirrel straightened up, blew a tremendous blast on his trumpet, and said :

“ Ah ! that’s the way to serve him ! That’s what I have always said : Be defiant, be defiant ! ”

“ O you have, have you ? ” said Ruthie sarcastically.

Then the whole army cheered and cheered again, but the Chief of the Gamekeepers looked at the bridge and shook his head dubiously.

The court poet, Lord Babblington, who rode with the army, made so correct a report of the affair of London Bridge that Ruthie never forgot it and, when she was at home again, she often repeated portions of his great poem, as she said it told the story exactly. It was one hundred and fifty verses long, but here are some of her extracts :

(VERSE 45)

But the Chief — his brow was sad ; and the Chief — his
speech was low ;

And darkly looked he at the flood, and darkly at the foe.

Their van will be upon us before the bridge goes down,
And if they once may win the bridge what hope to save the
town ?

(VERSE 46)

Then outspake little Ruthie, the visitor of state :
“ To every girl upon this earth luck cometh soon or late,
And how can luck come better, then facing fearful boys,
And squelching them in girlish style with neither fuss nor
noise ?

(VERSE 47)

“ Hew down the bridge, O Chiefy, with all the speed you
may,
I, with two more to help me, will keep these boys away.
In yon straight path a thousand may well be stopped by
three !
Now, who will stand on either hand and plague these boys
with me ? ”

(VERSE 48)

Then outspake Jumping Joan, all full of jumps and glee ;
“ Lo, I will stand at thy right hand and plague these boys
with thee.”
And spake the Four-Horned Lady, always Four-Horned is
she :
“ I will abide at thy left side and plague these boys with
thee.”

(VERSE 49)

“ Miss Ruthie,” said the Chief, then, “ as thou sayest so let
it be ! ”—

And straight against King George’s troop forth went those
girlics three.

For Ruthie in her teasing spared neither big nor bold,
Nor green, nor wise, nor any size — for boys were made to
scold.

So little Jumping Joan and the Four-Horned-
Lady-always-Four-Horned danced across the bridge
with Ruthie and swung the rope gayly while Ruthie
jumped and sang :

We’ll swing the rope, we’ll swing the rope,

We’ll swing and swing it still,

We’ll swing it in King George’s face

As he comes down the hill.

There’s not a quiver in my mouth,

Nor tear in either eye,

And as he comes I’ll greet him with :

“ Now, Georgy — don’t you cry ! ”

O, no, Georgy — don’t you cry for me,

I dare you though, to kiss me, O — but do it on your
knee !

Meanwhile the Chief of the Gamekeepers and all the court were pulling and hauling at London Bridge to loosen, or break it, so as to keep King George and his troops from crossing — or, to quote from Lord Babblington :

(VERSE 53)

Now while the Three were jumping rope, so gayly and so grand,
The Chief called out to all the court to come and bear a hand ;
And squirrel, girls and horses, with goat and boys also,
Pulled hard upon the plank above and loosed the props below.

But now with a shout that made the bridge-wreckers tremble with anxiety, and the squirrel shiver with fear, down the hill at the head of his troops came King George the Great.

(VERSE 57)

Fast by the royal standard o'erlooking all the war,
King George, the all-ferocious, came in a Pullman car ;
At his right rode Tommy Tucker, the Prince of Tipseytoes,
At his left the Pterodactyl, still brooding o'er his woes.



"WE'LL SWING THE ROPE, WE'LL SWING AND SWING IT STILL."

(VERSE 63)

The Three jumped fast and faster, nor looked upon their
foes,

And a great shout of laughter from all the vanguard rose,
And down the hill King George came in palace-car so gay;
To earth he sprang — where Ruthie stood —
And looked as ugly as he could,
And thus to her did say :

“ O ! O !! O !!!

Open the gates as high as the sky
And let King George and his troops pass by ! ”

Ruthie looked at him with some curiosity. He was a very hunchy and ugly-looking boy and, on the whole, Ruthie hardly blamed the girls for crying when he kissed them ; but she assumed the most disdainful look possible to her and pointing her finger straight at him, she said :

Georgy Porgy, Pudding and Pie,
Kissed the girls and made them cry.
But you'll kiss no more, for I tell you true
They've had quite enough, King George, of you.
And now when you come to the river's edge
You've got to pay toll at London Bridge.

King George was so surprised at this unexpected defiance that he stood and stared at Ruthie with open mouth. She, taking advantage of so good an opportunity, flung a handful of pepper into his mouth; and while he sputtered and coughed, the three girls joined hands and danced around him singing :

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,

Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.

But he didn't look nearly so foolish and frapper,

As does ugly King George with his mouth full of pepper.

Now while all this was going on, the Chief of the Gamekeepers and his court were working like beavers, at the bridge. Here is another of Ruthie's extracts from the great poem :

(VERSE 68)

But meanwhile Chief and army on all the planks have pried,
And now the bridge hangs tottering upon the streamlet's side.
"Come back, come back, Miss Ruthie!" loud cried the ladies
all;

"Back, Joan! back, Four-Horned one! back ere the ruin
fall!"

(VERSE 69)

Back darted Jumping Joan ; the Four-Horned darted back,
And as she passed she caught, and tore a great hole in her
sack.

But when they turned their faces, and on the further shore
Saw little Ruthie stand alone, they would have crossed once
more,

(VERSE 70)

But with a splash and splatter the plank fell in the stream,
And all that those two girls could do was just to stand and
scream ;

But a great shout of triumph rose from the court so gay,
And great King George in rage and wrath said " Ruthie's
won the day ! "

(VERSE 75)

Alone stood little Ruthie, but constant still in mind,
Those horrid, ugly boys in front and not a bridge behind.
" Hum ! " said the Pterodactyl, " now who's the creature —
say ? "

" Now yield thee ! " cried King George the Great. " I'll have
that kiss to-day ! "

But Ruthie didn't yield a bit ; she just faced
King George and all his troops, and, taking her

jumping-rope, went skipping in and out among his astonished ranks, and called out to the little maidens on the opposite bank : " Come on, girls ! come on ! he's nothing to be afraid of ! come across and have a game."

Ruthie's boldness made all the rest feel bold, and while the goat stood in the centre of the stream, all the little maidens jumped from the shore to his back, and from there to the other bank, and danced up to Ruthie singing :

London Bridge has fallen down,
Fallen down,
Fallen down,
London Bridge has fallen down,
My fair lady !

With a race and a romp they danced and sung on the mossy bank of the stream, while King George, first dumb with astonishment, and then stricken with terror at such unlooked-for actions on the part of girls whom he had been accustomed to lord it over, turned in dismay and with all his troops rushed pell-mell up the hill and fled for dear life.

ONE BY ONE THE LITTLE MAIDENS JUMPED TO THE OTHER BANK.



Up the hill he fled, while the Chief of the Game-keepers with his army and the court stood on the opposite bank and cheered until they were hoarse, the squirrel, meanwhile, strutting around as if he had done it all himself. Up the hill fled King George and all his troops, while close at their heels raced and chased the merry little maidens with Ruthie leading on, and as they raced and ran they sang right jollily :

Georgy Porgy, Pudding and Pie,
Kissed the girls and made them cry ;
When the girls came out to play
Georgy Porgy ran away —
Ha! Ha! Ha!

And so ended the great and victorious battle of London Bridge.

CHAPTER IX.

DANCING ON THE GREEN GRAVEL.

There was an old man of Toulouse
Who lived on cold cranberry juice,
But he eat it so raw
That it twisted his jaw
So they pickled that man of Toulouse,

sang Ruthie merrily as she went along the palace corridors with a hop, skip and a jump soon after the triumphant return of the court from the bloodless victory at London Bridge.

There was a young person named Ruthie,
All girly, and curly and youthful;
She could romp and could run
Till she dazzled the sun
As it shone on this frisky young Ruthie,

come back an answering chorus.

“My! who’s that?” asked Ruthie.

"O," said the squirrel who was strutting up and down the palace corridors, smoking a cigarette, and with his paws thrust into the pockets of a green velvet smoking jacket, "that's only some of the girls having a Jollification over there on the Green Gravel in honor of the thrashing we gave that rascally King George and his troops."

"We, indeed!" said Ruthie. "My, my, my! what a long tail our cat's got!"

"Cat!" exclaimed the squirrel. "O, dear, dear! don't let her get me, Ruthie; where is she, where is she? where is the horrid cat?" and he sprang to Ruthie's shoulder and sat there chattering and trembling.

"O, goosey!" laughed Ruthie. "I didn't mean a real live cat of course. I meant you and your boasting. That's what my teacher calls a proverb — or an allegory, I don't just know which."

"Well, I don't like your proverbs and your alligators — ugh! long, dreadful, slimy, scaly things. I hate 'em!" said the squirrel severely.

"No, no," Ruthie exclaimed, "you don't understand. I said allegory, not alligator; proverbs and

allegories, you know; something you say that teaches something or other."

"Well, all the same I don't like your proverbs or your allegories," the squirrel asserted as he sprang to the floor again and smoothed down his velvet jacket. "They are not at all nice."

"O, aren't they!" said Ruthie, "well, all right; —but where are the girls?"

"Over there on the Green Gravel, I told you," said the squirrel.

"Please show me the way, there's a dear," said Ruthie sweetly.

"O, there's Will, the gardener," said the squirrel, ungallantly. "Just follow him and you'll find it fast enough; for where there's a Will there's a way, you know."

"That's a proverb, too," Ruthie remarked.

"Well, we're square then," the squirrel said; "tit for tat. Now run along, won't you? this is my busy day."

So Ruthie ran after Will, the gardener, and sure enough he did show her the way, for it soon brought her to a beautiful little park laid out in

neat lawns and paths and flower-beds. A high rustic fence encircled it. At a dear little vine-covered turnstile, Ruthie stopped to listen to the singing, and as soon as there came a pause she cried out, "O say, girls, mayn't I come in too?"

"Why, of course, Ruthie," they replied, running to the gate; "only you must pay the fee; you must draw the bucket of water first."

Ruthie stepped briskly across to the pretty little well and letting down the bucket drew it up brimming over with crystal water and filled her shining silver pail. Then she gave it to My Lady's daughter, who sent it to the creamery, and passing through the turnstile she found the pathway strewn with green sprigs and sprays and leaves, and just beyond two little maidens in green tarlatan were holding a great laurel-bush across the path. Beyond the laurel-bush, Ruthie heard the chorus of girlish voices :

Draw a pail of water

For my lady's daughter!

My father's a king; my mother's a queen;

My two little sisters are dressed in green,

Stamping greens and parsley,
Marigold leaves and daisies.

One with a rush !

Two with a rush !

Pray thee, fine lady, come under my bush !

And Ruthie stamped the green and parsley as
directed, and singing gayly :

One to make ready,
Two to prepare,
Three to go slam-bang
Right through there !

she caught up her skirts and with a pretty little
rush dashed under the laurel-bush.

"There, now she's initiated !" all the little
maidens cried, and another added,

"Come on, Ruthie ; come on, I say, and get
washed."

"Get washed ?" said Ruthie, "why, I had a nice
bath last night and I'm as clean as clean can be."

"O, well, you must be washed in milk, you
know, to play on the Green Gravel," they explained
to her.

So Ruthie was led through the creamery to a nice little bath-house and placed under a golden shower-bath, and, when she turned on the faucet, instead of cold water there came down a shower of warm, rich milk, and then she was scrubbed and scrubbed till she was all of a glow and as rosy as a peach; and after that she was dressed in the loveliest suit of white and scarlet silk



"O," SAID THE SQUIRREL.

imaginable. When she came from the bath-house all soft and glowing and radiant, there were all the other little maidens in suits and smiles to match, and they all walked in couples around the park to a broad plaza of green gravel — "as green as green could be," Ruthie exclaimed — and as they walked around the plaza they sang very softly and sweetly:

Green Gravel; Green Gravel,
How green the grass grows,
And all the pretty maidens are fit to be seen!
O, wash them in milk,
And dress them in silk,
And the first to go down shall be married,

and then they all sat down on the grass at precisely the same moment.

"There! that's the trouble," they explained to Ruthie; "we all sit down together; we always do; and, as there's no first one to go down, why none of us can ever get married! Isn't it too provoking?"

"Why, yes, it does seem real provoking," said sympathetic Ruthie. "But there must be a first one to go down, you know; isn't there some one here who can decide the question for you?"

"Why — who?" they asked her.

"Well — there's the Chief of the Gamekeepers," suggested Ruthie.

"O, we shouldn't ask *him*," they objected with many blushes.

"Well — there's Dixie the Ogre," said Ruthie.

"O, we couldn't *ask* him," they protested, with some show of fear.

"Well, then — there's the squirrel," Ruthie proposed as a last resort.

"O, my ; we *wouldn't* ask him," they all exclaimed, rather contemptuously.

"Is there no one else then?" said Ruthie with spirit.

They studied the question thoughtfully.

"Well — there's the Sage of Sacarappa," they said finally.

"Why, who is the Sage of Sacarappa?" inquired Ruthie.

"O — he's our conundrum-answerer," they explained. "Strange we didn't think of him before."

"Why, then, let's try him," said Ruthie, and they all danced off, across the Green Gravel, to a hollow oak-tree; and in the trunk of the tree was a door, and on the door was a knocker, and the knocker was a baby's face. So each little maiden went up to the knocker, and, tapping it on forehead, eyes, nose, and mouth, they said, each in turn :

Knock at the Door ;
Peep in ;
Lift up the Latch —
Walk in !

And then the door swung open and in they all walked — right into the trunk of the tree. It was horribly dark, and all that Ruthie could distinguish was a pair of great yellow eyes gleaming through the darkness. Then, while one of the little maidens played on a jew's-harp they all sang decorously :

O Sage of Sacarappa,
So docile and so dapper,
O, grewsome Whipper-snapper,
Come — riddle this to me !
Say which of us is sightliest ?
Which went down first and lightliest ?
And which of us is likeliest
The first to married be ?

The great yellow eyes winked sagely and soberly, there was a sigh as of perplexity heard through the darkness, and then the solemn and mysterious



UNDER THE LAUREL-BUSH.

words came from the Sage of Sacarappa: "Time alone can tell!"

"Well, but how will Time know?" they all asked.

"Why, you can tell Time — can't you?" inquired the Sage.

"O yes, sir," was the reply; "the long hands are minutes and the short hands hours."

"Well, if the short hands are yours," the Sage began, but Ruthie cut him short.

"What a lot of nonsense!" she said; "why, girls, who *is* that in the dark?"

"O Ruthie, don't speak like that," they implored. "You'll irritate him and then he won't tell us anything. He's a very wise old man with a beard."

I'm a learned old man with a beard;
And I'm honored, respected and feared
By the maidens so small
And I fascinate all
With my wise yellow eyes and my beard,

chanted the Sage in monotonous tones.

“Well, you don’t fascinate me, I’m sure,” said impetuous Ruthie. “Why, girls,” she exclaimed, “I don’t believe he’s an old man with a beard at all, and I don’t believe he’s a Sage, nor anything of the kind. His voice sounds very familiar.”

The yellow eyes retreated farther into the blackness, and the voice of the Sage sounded a little shaky as he tried to speak indignantly :

And dar’st thou then
To beard me, lying in my den ?
To lug me from this hall ?
And hop’st thou then unscared to go ?
No! — for my bride I’ll keep you ; so !
Unless, Miss Ruthie, off you go !
Clear out now, one and all !

The little maidens backed hastily towards the door at this outburst, saying timidly to Ruthie, “O Ruthie, do come away ; he’s furious.”

But Ruthie said, “Who’s afraid !” and darting forward caught the Sage of Sacarappa by the beard and dragged him winking and blinking towards the light and then — well, whom do you

suppose it was? Why, whom, to be sure, but Ruthie's old friend the goat.

Then — O how enraged all the little maidens were! They jumped at that poor old goat, and poked him and pulled him and pummelled him, and, making a long chain of vines and roses, they fastened it around his neck and dragged him off to the Green Gravel where they took turns riding on his back around and across the plaza.

As they were thus riding gayly, there sounded a flourish of trumpets outside the rustic fence, and, running towards the turnstile, Ruthie saw a gorgeously arrayed little knight who, dressed in complete armor from top to toe, with shield and spear and waving plumes, was mounted on a fiery rocking-horse and followed by a company of knights and spearmen. Bowing with a grand salute to Ruthie the little knight said,

I'm a Knight out of Spain

Come to court the Lady Jane.

And who should "the Lady Jane" be but little Jumping Joan who came running and skipping

forward quite dazzled by the brilliant young knight who had come to court her. But wise young Ruthie thought that she was older than her little jumping friend and knew more of the ways of the world. So she held back little Jumping Joan with one hand and replied severely,

The Lady Jane is yet too young,
To be deceived by your flattering tongue.

Whereat the lordly young knight smiled, and dashing his spurs into his horse he replied,

Be she young, or be she old,
It is for gold
She must be sold ;
So fare you well, my Lady Gray,
I will return another day !

But this did not satisfy Ruthie, for she said to him sarcastically,

Go back, go back, my Spanish knight,
And clean your spurs and boots so bright.

And the knight said, snapping his fingers contemptuously in Ruthie's face,

My spurs and boots they were not wrought,
Nor in this country were they bought;
So fare you well, my Lady Gray,
I will return another day,



“I’M A KNIGHT OUT OF SPAIN.”

and with a low bow and a farewell trumpet peal the
“Knight out of Spain” turned with his retinue and
galloped rapidly away, while all the little maidens

gathered around little Jumping Joan and declared that it was just too mean for anything.

The excitement over this adventure was just beginning to subside when another trumpet peal sounded outside the rustic fence, and again Ruthie ran forward. This time she saw only a single rider — the lively young person in Lincoln-green who had first welcomed Ruthie on her arrival at the city gates.

The lively young person in Lincoln-green cried out,

O, Ruthie; Uncle John is very sick!

and Ruthie, turning to the little maidens, said,

O, girls; Uncle John is very sick!

At once all the little maidens joined hands and dancing around in a ring, all on the Green Gravel, sang sadly,

Uncle John is very sick!

What shall we send him?

and Ruthie answered in a tempting rhyme,

Three gold wishes,
Three gold kisses,
And a slice of gingerbread.

Then the chorus of little maidens asked,

What shall we send them on?

To which Ruthie promptly responded,

On a golden saucer.

Still sang the little maidens,

Whom shall we send it by?

and Ruthie replied,

By the Governor's Daughter.

At once there was a bustle of preparation. The Governor's Daughter was dressed in her neatest and prettiest, the goat was decorated with the brightest and sweetest flowers, and the squirrel was ordered to attend upon the little lady as squire, in his richest costume.

Soon the closed gates of the park swung open and out came the Governor's Daughter, mounted

on the goat and followed by the squirrel, who bore in his paws a great golden saucer in which had been placed the three gold wishes, the three gold kisses, and the slice of gingerbread.

Ruthie and a crowd of little maidens ran along by the side of the Governor's Daughter, and so they hurried past the palace on their way to visit poor, sick Uncle John.

When they had gone a short distance beyond the palace, they entered a great pine forest, and just ahead they caught the gleam of armor, and of waving plumes. Little Jumping Joan looked at Ruthie appealingly.

"Who is it?" Ruthie asked.

"O, Ruthie dear," little Jumping Joan replied; "it is that Knight out of Spain again."

"O never mind him," Ruthie said; "just you stay by me."

And standing before the Governor's Daughter and the goat, while the squirrel stood ready to drop the golden saucer and run at the first sign of danger, Ruthie waited for the approach of the Knight out of Spain.

W. H. P. 1850



THE GOVERNOR'S DAUGHTER.

He came riding rapidly towards her and with a low bow said,

Madam, I have gold and silver,
Madam, I have house and land,
Madam, I have ships on the ocean,
All of them at your command.

But Ruthie, waving her hand haughtily, replied,

I want none of your gold and silver,
I want none of your house and land,
I want none of your ships on the ocean,
All I want is a nice young man.

At this the Knight out of Spain whirled his horse around, and shaking his spear, he sang out to his retinue: "Come, Philanders, let us be a-marching," and at the head of his followers he charged furiously at Ruthie and her company of little maidens.

The Governor's Daughter instantly leaped from the goat's back, and with the rest of the little maidens hid behind the great pine-trees. The goat ranged up alongside of Ruthie, and stood with his horns lowered ready to defend her. Little

Jumping Joan clung to Ruthie's skirt for protection, while the squirrel, who had dropped Uncle John's golden saucer as soon as he saw the Knight out of Spain shake his spear, went springing towards the rail fence. But, alas, his crimson cloak caught on a snag, and he tumbled head foremost into the mole's tunnel; the mole, thus disturbed, scratched the squirrel's nose with his sharp forepaws and the squirrel, now thoroughly frightened, thought the Knight out of Spain was pricking him with his spear, so he lay on his back wildly kicking his legs in the air and shrieking frantically, "O, I surrender, I surrender!"

Meanwhile Ruthie, not the least frightened, stood awaiting the charge of the knights. Suddenly her eye fell upon something green at her feet. She picked it up. It was a four-leaved clover. Gayly she swung it around her head, crying out, "Good luck; good luck!" and holding it towards the Knight out of Spain she sang hopefully,

All I want is a nice young man!

The Knight out of Spain halted a moment to see

just how to catch up little Jumping Joan; the other knights in his train halted also to peer behind the pine-trees and see which of the little maidens they



THE CHIEF OF THE GAMEKEEPERS.

preferred, and Ruthie, still shaking her four-leaved clover at them sung still more hopefully,

All I want is a nice young man!

As she sang, there came flying out from between the pine-trees the Chief of the Gamekeepers, mounted on a snapdragon. Kissing his hand to Ruthie, he lowered his lance and rode straight at

the Knight out of Spain, striking him such a blow that the Knight out of Spain tumbled off his rocking-horse and lay sprawling on the ground. At once all his retinue turned and fled in haste, hotly pursued by the Chief of the Gamekeepers. Then the squirrel, seeing how the tide had turned, sprang from his bed in the mole-hill, and pulling out his penknife he ran towards the prostrate Knight out of Spain, shouting,

Here comes the candle to light you to bed;
And here comes the chopper to chop off your head.

“No, you don’t,” said Ruthie, as she put out her foot and tripped up the squirrel so that he fell flat on his nose. Then she picked up the Knight out of Spain, placed him across the goat’s back and sent him to the palace in charge of two of the pages, with orders to put him in the hospital along with little Sallie Waters.

When the Chief of the Gamekeepers came back from his pursuit of the knights Ruthie crowned him with a wreath of oak leaves and sang, in her merriest voice,

See the conquering hero comes.

Then the Chief of the Gamekeepers took her right arm, and the snapdragon her left and, followed by all the little maidens they walked back to the Green Gravel singing,

Ruthie wants none of your gold and silver,
Ruthie wants none of your house and land,
Ruthie wants none of your ships on the ocean,
All she wants is a nice young man.

When they returned to the park of the Green Gravel, Ruthie and all the little maidens took another nice milk-bath, put on new silk dresses and sang on the plaza as before :

Green Gravel, Green Gravel,
How green the grass grows !
And all the pretty maidens are fit to be seen !
O, wash them in milk,
And dress them in silk,
And the first to go down shall be married.

But, as they all sat down on the Green Gravel, whir-r-r-r ; tick-tick-tick, went the telephone. Ruthie

hastened to it and listened ; then she came back, her hands lifted sympathetically, and whispered to the Governor's Daughter. 'The Governor's Daughter put up her hands and whispered to her next neighbor. So the secret went around the circle, and then all the little maidens sang softly and soberly :

O Joan,
Dear Joan,
Your true-love is dead.
He sent you
A message
To return back your head.

Joan sighed distressfully and put her hands to her head in some perplexity.

"O, but that's absurd, you know," said Ruthie. "Return back your head indeed ! I wouldn't do it. It's your head, isn't it ? I wouldn't take my head off and return it for any true-love in the world."

"O, but she must ; it's in the game, you know," said the little maidens.

"Well, but she sha'n't," Ruthie said decisively.

"I don't believe he's dead. I don't believe he's a Knight out of Spain. I don't believe he's anything but a knight out of his head."

"Hm ! you're a fine one," said the squirrel. "If it hadn't been for you, Miss Ruthie, he would have been a knight without his head. I do wish you wouldn't interfere with my business."



RUTHIE AT THE TELEPHONE.

"Your business indeed !" said Ruthie, with great indignation.

"Your business indeed !" echoed all the little maidens, and with that they chased him off the Green Gravel and through the vine-covered turnstile, and so on up the palace stairs singing :

Tell-tale-tit !

Your tongue shall be slit

And all the dogs in the town

Shall have a little bit.

Which frightened the squirrel so badly that he ran up into the garret and hid himself in a battered old ice-cooler ; for he was terribly afraid of dogs, poor thing !

CHAPTER X.

RUTHIE LEARNS A "MORAL" LESSON.

ROO-THIE! Roo-thie!" a shrill voice rang out upon the air. Ruthie looked all around wondering who could be calling her. Again came the voice:

"Roo-thie! O — Roo-thie!" Still no one to be seen.

"That is very funny," thought puzzled Ruthie. Then she said aloud, "Well, what do you want? Who is it calling me?"

"It's me," said the voice more earnestly than grammatically. "Come here and help me."

"I will if I can," said Ruthie; "but where are you anyhow?"

"Here I am," said the voice; "bunked right up against the palace wall. Dear — dear, do hurry up, won't you, or I sha'n't have any head left."

Ruthie hurried down the palace stairs, following the direction of the voice, and soon found, bumping hard up against the side of the palace wall, the person with the voice, and a singular little person he was. Though he had his face turned toward Ruthie she couldn't make out whether his back was his front or his front his back; for while his face looked one way his clothes and his toes certainly looked another. His cheeks were streaked with dirt and tears; he looked the picture of woe.

"Well!" exclaimed Ruthie, as she stopped and looked at him in amazement. "Who are you?"

"O," said the boy dolefully, "I'm the Boy that Got out of Bed Backwards, and I'm all turned around, you know. Do please set me straight."

"The Boy that Got out of Bed Backwards!" Ruthie repeated. "Dear me, does it make you look like that? Why, mamma often tells me that she thinks I must have got out of bed backwards, but I'm sure I never look as you do."

"O, that's because you don't know how you really do look," exclaimed the Boy. "But as soon as we get into No-Man's Land, you know, we see



THE BOY WHO GOT OUT OF BED BACKWARDS.

ourselves as others see us — and that's what's the matter with me."

"The Boy that Got out of Bed Backwards!" still soliloquized Ruthie. "And so you dressed backwards, too, did you?"

"Why, of course," said the Boy, "I had to dress the wrong way when I got out of bed the wrong way, didn't I? But what's the use of talking so much — why can't you help to put me straight? Don't you see I'm all turned 'round? My face looks one way and my feet the other, and the more I try to get away from this dreadful wall the more I bump up against it."

"But why didn't you get out of bed frontwards?" Ruthie inquired, putting on his jacket right side before.

"Why, indeed?" the Boy said sulkily. "How could I help it? It was all the fault of the Bald-headed Tyrant."

"Of who?" answered Ruthie curiously, as she pulled his cap straight and led him away from the wall.

"Why, of the Bald-headed Tyrant," the Boy re-

peated. "Do you mean to say you don't know the Bald-headed Tyrant from No-Man's Land?"

"Why, I'm sure I don't," Ruthie replied.

"Hm—" exclaimed the Boy incredulously.

"Got any babies at your house?"

"O, no," said Ruthie. "There's only Paul and Jennie and me. I'm the youngest. But why do you ask?"

"Then don't you talk," said the Boy who Got out of Bed Backwards. "Don't you talk," he repeated passionately. "You don't know what sorrow is. You don't know how life can be made a burden. You don't know how it feels to be called a Nuisance if you happen to whistle or to slam a door. You don't know the Bald-headed Tyrant from No-Man's Land!"

"Why, no," said Ruthie innocently. "I don't. Do you know all that? O, what a pity! Tell me all about it. Who is the Bald-headed Ty—"

But just here the little maidens came trooping down the palace stairs calling "Ruthie, Ruthie!" and the Boy that Got out of Bed Backwards gave a loud sniff of discouragement, and saying "Good-

ness ! more girls ?" hurried out of sight around a corner of the palace.

"O dear," said Ruthie, "what a pity he ran away. I wanted to hear all about it."

"All about what?" asked the little maidens wonderingly.

"Why, all about the queer troubles of the Boy that Got out of Bed Backwards," said Ruthie.

"O, has he been bothering you?" they asked. "He's always pouting around. He's as owly and as cranky as a dog in a dishcloth."

"Well, but," said Ruthie, "he says it's all the fault of the Bald-headed Tyrant from No-Man's Land. Now, who is the Bald-headed Tyrant? Can't you tell me about him?"

The little maidens at once became hushed and sober. "O, *do* you want to see him?" they asked.

"Of course I do," said Ruthie, her curiosity now fully roused. "I want to see all the sights. Who is he?"

"O, he's the born enemy of all the children," they said. "But we don't dare to whisper a word against him for we all love him so."

"Well, that's very funny," said Ruthie, somewhat mystified. "How can that be?"

"Well, if you want to see him," they said, "we



ONE OF THE TURKISH MUTES.

can go to the Farm by way of his palace."

"The Farm," Ruthie repeated inquiringly; "what Farm?"

"O, we're going up to see the Farmer sow his seed. Don't you want to go?"

"Why, certainly," said Ruthie. "And can we take in the Bald-headed Tyrant on the way?"

"We can go past his palace and see him; but, dear me, we don't want to take him in with us, you know. He's too awfully obstreperous. But if we do go to see him we've got to have towels tied over our feet and have our mouths sewed up."

"What for?" asked Ruthie.

"Why, so as to keep perfectly quiet, you know."

So Ruthie and the little maidens went on board the steam yacht and sailed away off towards the sunrise; and the little maidens pointing beyond the sunrise said:

"That's Everywhere; that's where the Bald-headed Tyrant comes from, and that," they said, pointing to an island just ahead, "is Here. That's where he lives now. Don't you know one of those men they call Poets says he comes

Out of the Everywhere into the Here?

"Well, we're here, too," said Ruthie.

"Yes, we're here ; so let's get off," they replied.

They landed at a small dock and four Turkish Mutes came down and tied a feather bed over the engine of the steam yacht so that it need not make

any noise, while four more Mutes took Ruthie and the little maidens into the steamboat office and tied their feet up in towels and sewed their mouths securely.

Then the Mutes conducted them silently and solemnly up a pathway thickly strewn with tan,



RUTHIE, WITH MUFFLED FEET.

to deaden all possible sounds, and into a beautiful little path in the centre of which stood a gleaming ivory palace from the top of which streamed

the Flag of the Embroidered Bib, the all-conquering banner of the Bald-headed Tyrant from No-Man's Land.

The trees in the park were decorated with silver and ivory rattles, and with bright worsted and rubber balls of brilliant colors, while the steps to the palace were covered with a thick and noiseless velvet carpet.

As they passed in through the wide doorway a lot of fingers floated toward them through the air with cautioning gestures, and a perpetual whisper of "Hush! he's asleep!" sounded in their ears. Softly Ruthie and the little maidens crept up the grand staircase between files of Turkish Mutes shod with pillows and armed with rattles and Jumping Jacks.

They paused a moment before a door upon which Ruthie read, in golden letters, this notice :

No heedless boy
May here annoy;
Nor risky, frisky girl.
They'll find their doom
In dungeon gloom,

If here they whisk and whirl.

Then enter, in silence, for here, close at hand,

Is the Bald-headed Tyrant from No-Man's Land.

Cautiously and carefully they entered. The room was darkened by heavy curtains, closely drawn, and in one corner Ruthie saw what looked like a crib under a canopy of mosquito netting. She approached it gently, while a warning whisper of "Hush-sh-sh!" attended her. Then, very gently, she drew down the coverlid. But, gently as she touched it, she was yet too vigorous; for no sooner had she done so than there came from the crib a long, loud wail:

"Ah-h-h-h; ya-a-a-a! ow-w-w!"

Ruthie could stand it no longer. She tore the stitches from her mouth and burst out in tones of astonishment: "Why, girls — the idea!"

The Bald-headed Tyrant from No-Man's Land was only a dear little baby!

Instantly Ruthie was pounced upon by a chorus of mammas and nurses' voices, and a whole brigade of warning fingers came dashing up to her, shaking indignantly.

"O, you careless, careless girl!" chimed all the voices.

Then they hovered over the crib. "Well, it was too bad-y — too bad-y, so it was," they murmured; "did the naughty, naughty girl wake up mamma's precious?" And Ruthie felt herself seized by the terrible Mutes and hurried off toward the dungeon. But all the little maidens swooped down on the Mutes, and pinched and pestered them until they were glad enough to drop Ruthie. And then she and all the little maidens kicked the towels from their feet and, rushing hastily down to the dock, tore the feather bed from the engine and steamed rapidly away towards the Farm.

"O, Ruthie, how could you?" said all the breathless little maidens, when they were at last in a place of safety.

"Well, how could I know it was a baby?" asked Ruthie. "I thought a Bald-headed Tyrant was a big old man with a great blue beard and no hair on the top of his head, and who was growlier than even Dixie the Ogre."

"O, pooh!" said the little maidens, "that's only

a papa, and even a papa has to stand 'round for the baby."

"Dear me, though," said Ruthie thoughtfully, "did my papa have to stand 'round for me?"

"Why, of course — well, you'd better ask your mamma," the little maidens suggested. "Don't you know there's nobody in the world that has to be run for, and jumped for, and 'tended to, and minded, and amused more than the Baby? Isn't the whole house turned upside down for him, and don't everybody have to mind their P's and Q's when there's a baby in the house? — Well, that's why they call him the Bald-headed Tyrant from No-Man's Land."

Ruthie found plenty to occupy her thoughts for the rest of the voyage and at last they arrived at the Farm.

The Farm was a great island of newly-ploughed land, and in the centre of it rose a little hill on which stood the Farmer.

"What grows on this farm?" Ruthie inquired.

"O — oats, peas, beans and barley, you know," said her companions.

"Why, I don't see anything growing," said Ruthie as she looked over the bare black earth.

"How *do* oats, peas, beans and barley grow?"

The little maidens gazed at her, shook their heads, and, joining hands, they all skipped up the hill, and, forming a circle around the Farmer, they sang,

Oats, peas, beans and barley, O!

'Tis you, nor I, nor nobody know

How oats, peas, beans and barley grow,

'Tis you, nor I, nor nobody know.

But the Farmer, straightening himself up in a rheumatic sort of way, took a handful of seed from his bag and scattering it over the field he said,

Thus the Farmer sows his seed.

Then, folding his arms, he sang,

Stands awhile and takes his ease ;

Stamps his foot and claps his hands,

And turns around to view his lands,

A-waiting for a partner ;

A-waiting for a partner.

To which the little girls responded jubilantly,

Then open the ring
And choose one in,

adding shyly,

And kiss her when you get her in.

The Farmer looked around the circle of little maidens reflectively. Finally he took Ruthie's hand, drew her into the ring and kissed her while all the little maidens put their parted fingers before their eyes and said, "O — O — Ruthie !"

"What do you want a partner for?" Ruthie asked the Farmer, more interested in his gardening than his gallantries. "Is it such hard work to do your farming? Hasn't anything ever grown here before?"

"Well, I groan here often enough, I should think," said the Farmer; "and you'd groan too," he continued, "if you had to stoop and bend as I do."

"Why, I think farming is lovely," Ruthie said. "I should think you would be delighted with this

out-of-door life; that is," she said rather dubiously, "if you have a grain of enjoyment about you."

"O, I've grain enough," he said, taking a hand-



ful from his bag. "By the way — here's an oat for you," and he handed Ruthie a little oat.

"A note?" said Ruthie, "why, who from? where is it? I don't see any note."

"No — no; not a note," he explained, "but an oat. Well, you don't seem to have a grain of sense either. So," he said, taking her by the arm, "there'll be a pair of us, won't there?"

"Why — do pears grow here, too?" she asked, but before he could reply all the little maidens had joined hands, and dancing around Ruthie and the Farmer they sang gayly,

Now you're married you must obey,
You must be true to all you say,
And live together all your life,
And we'll pronounce you man and wife.

"Wife!" echoed Ruthie. "Married! O, here, girls, I didn't mean that kind of a partner at all. I thought he wanted a partner in the farming business. I don't want to *marry* him," and she tried to break through the circle of little maidens, but they were too strong for her. The Farmer also did not seem altogether satisfied. "See here, girls," he said. "That isn't just right, you know. You didn't sing the ceremony the way I'm used to hearing it. You should have sung,

Now you're married you must obey,
You must be true to all you say,
You must be kind, you must be good,
And help your husband chop the wood.



THE GAY DANCE AROUND RUTHIE AND THE FARMER

Now," he added, "I don't want a wife unless she will help me chop the wood. Would you help me chop the wood or would you not?" he demanded.

"I would not," Ruthie answered promptly.

Then I can't marry you,
My pretty maid,

sang the Farmer.

Nobody asked you, sir, she said,
Sir, she said,
Sir, she said,
Nobody asked you, sir, she said,

sang Ruthie, with a toss of her head, in reply.

The Farmer went back to his work drearily. "I never can find anybody that will promise to chop the wood," he murmured.

And Ruthie said to the little maidens, "O dear though, girls, but wasn't that a lucky escape? — But there," she added, "we came here to learn how oats, peas, beans and barley grow, and we don't know yet."

So they all danced around the Farmer again, singing,

Oats, peas, beans and barley grow,
'Tis you, nor I, nor nobody know,
How oats, peas, beans and barley grow;
'Tis you, nor I, nor nobody know.

The Farmer hesitated a moment. Then he made a motion as if to repeat his explanations but, looking at Ruthie wistfully, he said, "O dear, if you only would chop the wood."

"But I wouldn't," she said decidedly.

"Well, they grow of themselves — just like girls," he exclaimed.

"Do they ever outgrow anything — just like girls?" Ruthie inquired.

"Of course they do," replied the Farmer. "The very first thing they do when they begin to grow is to burst their jackets. Hark!"

Ruthie listened and heard a faint noise like the sound of far-off song. "What is it?" she asked.

"They're coming," said the Farmer. "Look sharp and you'll soon see how oats, peas, beans and barley grow."

And the song that Ruthie heard — at first soft

and low, then rising triumphantly — was something like this :

Under the snow,
Under the sod,
Wearily, drearily, waiting to plod ;
Under the sod
Under the snow,
Fearfully, tearfully waiting to grow —
Under the sod and the snow together,
Hide we and bide we till joyful spring weather.

Hey, for the spring,
Hey, for the sun,
Hurry ye, scurry ye, run, brothers, run !
Hey, for the sun,
Hey, for the spring,
Burst we our jackets with roystering ring,
White coats and brown coats and yellow together
Burst with the first of the happy spring weather.

Struggle and shout,
Shimmer and sway,
Up through the black earth we elbow our way,
Shimmer and sway,
Struggle and shout,

We've conquered! we've conquered! we're up and we're out!

Clash we and flash we our bright blades together
Green with the sheen of the royal spring weather.

And, sure enough, ere the joyous echoes died away, millions of tiny green blades flashed and quivered in the sunlight all over the Farm, while, following the bristling bayonet points of the bustling army of oats and barley, the fat little bodies and delicate tendrils of the host of peas and beans came hurrying to the light. Then the Farmer who seemed to brighten also with the coming of his tender-tinted crops raced this way and that, all life and action.

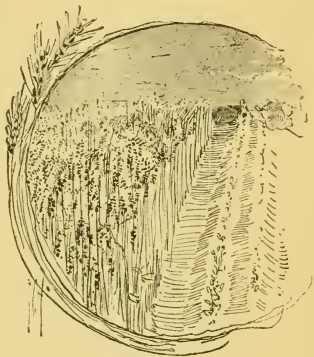
"Hey, you girls, clear out of that bean-patch!" he shouted. "Get off of those pea-vines! Now, then, don't trample down that barley! hey, you, look out for those oats! Come, come, you're in the way. My crop is up; my crop is up!" cried the Farmer delightedly.

"Don't you want a partner?" asked Ruthie slyly.

"Partner—partner—what do I want a partner

for?" he inquired. "I wouldn't take a partner for love or money. My, my," he added in delight, "do just *see* how those oats, peas, beans and barley grow."

"Why, they grow just the same as anything else," said Ruthie. "Right straight along without stopping."



THE FARMER'S GRAIN.

And as she made her way with the little maidens back to the steam yacht, she heard the Farmer singing joyfully:

Oats, peas, beans and barley, O!
 Waiting is weary, and waiting is slow.
 But oats, peas, beans and barley grow
 Though the waiting be weary, and dreary and slow.

So a lesson of patience in act and speech,
 Do the oats, peas, beans and the barley teach;
 A lesson of patience to children all,
 Be they children big or children small.

Ruthie sailed thoughtfully back to the palace and, as she landed, she said, "I suppose that last song of the Farmer was what you call a moral. Now, was he a Moral Farmer or were they moral oats, peas, beans and barley? O, shall I have to ask after this for a plate of moral baked beans, or for a plate of baked moral beans, or for a moral plate of baked beans?"

"There, there," said the squirrel, who had met her at the dock and had heard her query, "that'll do for you, Ruthie. Never mind the moral beans. Let us have peace."

And as Ruthie chased him up to the palace he sang,

Oats, peas, beans and barley, O!
Did you ever see seed that a Farmer could sow,
From which such a crop of morals could grow
As from oats, peas, beans and barley, O!

CHAPTER XI.

STORMING THE VACATION TOWER.

AS Ruthie and the squirrel ran up the palace stairs they noticed an unusual commotion in the great building. Pages were rushing to and fro, guards were pacing along the corridors, while archers and sharpshooters crowded the gables and balconies.

“Why, what can the matter be?” Ruthie said wonderingly.

“Very singular, very singular indeed,” said the squirrel. “I can’t understand how anything should be going on without my being informed. I wonder what’s afoot.”

“What’s a foot?” repeated Ruthie, “why, twelve inches, of course.”

“O Ruthie, Ruthie,” said the squirrel sadly, “is this a time to joke — with, we don’t know what

danger threatening us? But then," he added, "you don't know any better."

At this Ruthie burst into a ringing laugh and fourteen pages at once came running from fourteen different points.

"O, is that you, Ruthie? Well, hurry up. The Chief of the Gamekeepers wants to see you immediately, if not sooner," they all exclaimed.

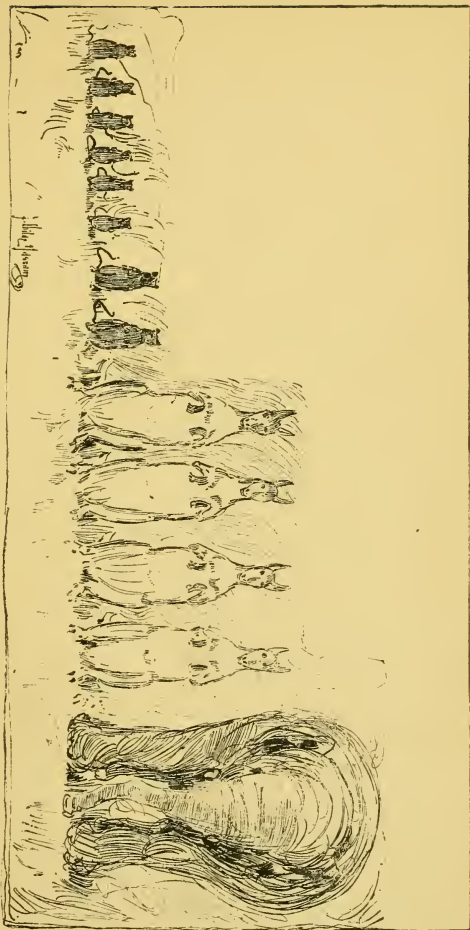
"Where is he?" Ruthie asked them.

"He's in the Throne Room; hurry up, hurry up, please," and they pushed and pulled her into the Throne Room. There Ruthie found the Chief of the Gamekeepers in earnest consultation with the representatives of all the Games and Plays in No-Man's Land, and the effect of so much earnestness on all these merry dispositions was most depressing. Every one looked "played out," but as soon as Ruthie entered they all brightened up and the Chief of the Gamekeepers turned to her with a sigh of relief:

"Ah, Ruthie, here you are at last. We want your advice. We are so anxious, so anxious."

"So anxious, so anxious," repeated all the coun-

THE FIRST CLASS IN NATURAL HISTORY.



cil in chorus, and Ruthie asked, "Why, whatever can be the matter? What are you anxious about? I never saw such a sick lot of games in all my life."

"Sick lot!" exclaimed Puss-in-the-Corner ruefully. "Why, we are so downcast, Ruthie, that you could get all the fun there is left in us into a six-by-nine lot."

"Well, you don't look very benign, and that's a fact," said Ruthie; "but what is the matter?"

"Why, Ruthie," said the Chief of the Gamekeepers, "the blackbird has just come flying into the palace saying that the Electric Boy reports that the Geography Class has just leaped down from the Jumping-Off Place."

"The Geography Class?" exclaimed Ruthie.

"Yes, the Geography Class," said the Chief of the Gamekeepers, "and worse than that, they are rolling right across the Egg-Shell Sea and will soon be on the shores of No-Man's Land."

"Dear me, though," said Ruthie, "that is dreadful. What are you going to do about it?"

"We don't know, we don't know," they all cried. "Can't you advise us?"

Ruthie looked thoughtful. "Can't you head them off somehow? Can't you get them into some sort of a strait and bother them till they have to turn back?"

The Chief of the Gamekeepers shook his head. "How can we?" he said. "The Geography Class knows all about straits; and we can't head them off, because, do what we will, there is always a Head to the Class."

"But what will they do if they should get into the city?" asked Ruthie. "Are they so very terrible?"

"O, they're death on games, you know," said the Chief of the Gamekeepers. "They are so smart that they can find out every catch you plan for them, and if they ever do get into the city they won't leave a single game of us a leg to stand upon. Dear, dear," he sighed, "here we have just got rid of one of our pests — that horrible Georgy Porgy — and, now, here's a worse danger to face. Why — O why did we sing to you

Sorrow comes here never.

You helped us splendidly with King George and his troops — help us, O help us now, Ruthie, with the Geography Class.”

Ruthie, Ruthie, little lass,
Save us from the Geography Class,

chanted all the council, appealingly.

Ruthie looked troubled. “It does seem to me,” she said, “that I have worked harder here in Play Day Town than I ever do in Real Life. I’ve heard my papa say that sometimes Play is the hardest kind of Work. So it is — sometimes. But — let me think.”

The Chief of the Gamekeepers handed her a crimson and gold Thinking Cap. “Try this,” said he.

Ruthie put on the Thinking Cap, and thought dreadfully hard, while all the council waited in breathless suspense.

“Well,” she said suddenly, “we must meet them. We must defend the city against them, We will!”

The vigor of her speech put fresh life into most of the Games. Only the squirrel collapsed and, bracing himself against the Blind Man-in-Buff, said "O, my goodness gracious ; O, my gracious goodness ! more trouble, more trouble ! I know this will be the death of me." And then he pulled



THE GEOGRAPHY CLASS THROWS
THE GREAT GLOBE.

out his memorandum pad and wrote wildly upon a new last Will and Testament.

"Yes, we will," repeated Ruthie. "The Geography Class, is it ? Well, haven't we got some kind of a class to face them ?"

The Chief of the Gamekeepers looked at his memorandum

book. "Let me see," he said ; "yes, there's the Natural History Class."

"First class in Natural History stand up !" said Ruthie, and six mice, two rats, four kangaoros

and the baby elephant at once stood before her.

“Now then,” Ruthie asked, “what are little boys made of?”

And the Natural History Class looked first down at the floor and then up at the ceiling to collect their thoughts, and sang in reply:

Snappers and snails,
And puppy-dogs' tails;
And that's what little boys are made of,
Made of.
That's what little boys are made of.

“Very good,” said Ruthie. “And now, what are little girls made of?”

Again the Natural History Class sang:

Sugar and spice,
And everything nice;
And that's what little girls are made of,
Made of.
That's what little girls are made of.

“Excellent, excellent,” cried Ruthie. “Now,”

she continued, turning to the Chief of the Gamekeepers, "tell Push and Pull to keep an extra good lookout at the city gate; put the Natural History Class in the square of the Mulberry Bush; rally your guards and soldiers around you, and we'll get the best of the Geography Class yet!"

"Ruthie, you're a trump!" said the Chief of the Gamekeepers. "I *will* take a bold stand! Prepare for battle!" he said, turning to his court. "Under Ruthie's lead we will meet and conquer the Geography Class!"

Then a great shout went up, but still the squirrel wrote on furiously and Ruthie, leaping on the goat's back, rode around the Throne Room, and halting in the centre she made this little speech:

And should my stumbly goat fall down —
As fall full well he may,
For never saw I such a chance
For rough-and-tumble play —
Press where you see my white arms wave
All wildly in the air,
And be your oriflamme to-day
Your Ruthie's golden hair.

Another shout rent the air, and, following Ruthie and the Chief of the Gamekeepers, all the court



THE SQUIRREL SEES THE NEW MOON OVER HIS LEFT SHOULDER.

and the council rushed out of the Throne Room. But still the squirrel wrote on unceasingly.

As the army marched down to the square of the

Mulberry Bush, Ruthie's attention was attracted by a massive tower that stood just behind the palace. She looked at it critically.

"What is that building?" she inquired of the Chief of the Gamekeepers.

"Why, that is the Vacation Tower," he replied.

"The Vacation Tower?" she echoed. "Why do you call it that?"

"Well," said the Chief of the Gamekeepers, "you see it was made out of all the strongest pieces of Hunk that the gamekeepers could get. Hunk, you know, is what makes you all safe when you're playing Tag or Hide-and-Seek, and we thought that, in case of danger, we ought to have a last place of safety to go to. So this tower was built out of the safest things we could find—pieces of Hunk."

"But why *Vacation* Tower?" Ruthie asked.

"I'm coming to that," said the Chief of the Gamekeepers. "You see, once upon a time, when Dixie the Ogre and I were on good terms, I visited him at his castle and found him overworked and broken down. 'Why don't you take a rest?' I

asked. 'Well,' he answered, 'I can't; I've often thought I ought to take a vacation tower' — that's what he said, a vacation tower — 'but I do believe,' he added sadly, 'that I shall never be able to take a vacation tower — in fact, a vacation tower is something that can't be taken.' Well, when we built that tower I said: If a vacation tower can't be taken it's what we want. Let us call this the Vacation Tower; and there you have it," he said, pointing to the tall pile, "it can't be taken — it's the Vacation Tower!"

"Why, I never heard of such a name," Ruthie remarked. "The Vacation Tower! Tower? Vacation Tower? — O," she exclaimed suddenly, as an idea of the meaning struck her, "I do believe he meant a 'tour,' only he pronounced it 'tower' — some people do. He meant that he was so over-worked that he could not take a 'vacation' tour."

"How could he?" asked the Chief of the Game-keepers. "Who is she? Where does she live? Dixie don't know any 'her' but old Mammy Tipseytoes, and he hates her. He wouldn't take anything to her. And how could he take a vacation

to her? You can *give* a vacation, and you can *take* a vacation, but you can't take a vacation *to* anybody."

"O — no, no, no," said Ruthie, distractedly, and she was about to explain the difference between a tour and a tower, when a great shout was heard beyond the city gates and the lively young person in Lincoln green came dashing up with the information that the Geography Class was before the city. Almost before he had finished his announcement, another shout was heard and then Push bursting through the city gate tumbled over Pull and they both went rolling over and over in their frantic efforts to get out of the way. Then the Geography Class came in through the unguarded gate and rolling over the prostrate forms of Push and Pull headed towards the square of the Mulberry Bush, and thus the enemy entered the city.

The Chief of the Gamekeepers and his army looked anxiously at Ruthie. She stood calm, but looked at the Geography Class with considerable curiosity. And a curious sight it was. Far in advance came the herald, the gigantic E. Quator.

He was, as Ruthie afterwards described him, "a sort of a dog and a sort of a lizard, and a sort of a snake. He just stood on his front feet, threw his tail over his head till he half swallowed himself, and so he rolled on ahead of the Geography Class." Behind him came a very, very long thin boy and a very, very round fat boy bearing the great banner of the Geography Class. Ruthie knew them at once — Latitude and Longitude. After them came the Geography Class. They rode on a great globe on which Ruthie plainly saw North and South America, Europe, Asia and Africa. The Class stood on the Globe and rolled it over and over as Ruthie had seen performers do at the circus, and balanced themselves with long map-pointers. The boy who was Head of the Class stood in the centre and the boy who was Foot had hard work to keep his balance. They dragged after them the Electric Boy, loaded with chains, and following him came their allies — the enemies of all the Games in No-Man's Land : Dixie the Ogre, Old Mammy Tipsey-toes, the Crooked Man, the Tangled Talkers and the Three Wise Men of Gotham.

Ruthie glanced at the formidable array. "First class in Natural History stand up," she ordered; and the six mice, the two rats, the four kangaroos and the baby elephant stood before her.

But Mr. E. Quator the herald of the Geography Class, rolled towards her and "unswallowing himself," as Ruthie expressed it, he said :

We come, we come,
From the Realm of Fact;
Our duty to do
In word and act,
Our duty to do
Though 'tis hard, we know,
To fumble you, rumble you, jumble you so.
Hark, then, to the word,
Every lad and lass,
That I speak for the valiant Geography Class :
We come, we come
All your play to end.
Hereafter your days
You in School must spend.
Hereafter your days
Must be studious more,
Than your folly-filled, jolly-filled ones before.

Then yield ye your No-Man's Land
Here as we pass,
To the valiant, determined Geography Class.

A shiver passed through the ranks of the army of the Chief of the Gamekeepers as the herald concluded. But Ruthie spoke boldly in reply :

We yield us to no one,
Nor fear we the foe.
You have come — but, Geography Class, you can go;
We are lovers of freedom,
Of fun and of play,
And your studies and tasks are not quite in our way,
Then turn ye — we spurn ye — attempt not to pass !
Advance at your peril — Geography Class !

The herald and the standard bearer stood aside. The Globe with the Geography Class came rolling on.

“ Ruthie, we warn you ! ” said the Boy who was Head of the Class.

“ Pooh for you ! ” answered Ruthie, snapping her fingers at him. Then she called out, “ First

class in Natural History recite ! What are little boys made of ? ”

And the Natural History Class sang :

Snappers and snails,
And puppy dogs' tails,
And that's what little boys are made of,
Made of.
That's what little boys are made of.

In a great rage, down jumped the little boys of the Geography Class from the great Globe — so quickly indeed that the boy who was Foot was rolled over in the rush. O, how mad they were !

“ Snappers and snails, are we ! Snappers and snails, are we ! ” they shouted in anger. And they caught up the great Globe in their hands and held it high in air. “ Puppy dogs' tails, are we ! Puppy dogs' tails, are we ! There, take that ! ” And they threw the great Globe straight at the First Class in Natural History. Plump, went the great Globe right against the baby elephant ; over he fell on the kangaroo, scattering the rats and mice right and left ; trip, bump went the goat and over fell

Ruthie, flat on her face. Then the army of No-Man's Land, when they saw their champion fall, turned and fled in dismay to the palace. Ruthie had lost the square of the Mulberry Bush, and the Geography Class was victorious.

She scrambled up quickly, just as the herald Mr. E. Quator rolled forward to take her prisoner. With her golden hair streaming on the wind she followed her fleeing army up the palace stairs. In the corridor she stumbled over the squirrel.

"I knew you'd fail! I knew you'd fail," he shouted. "I saw the new moon over my left shoulder last night, and I never knew it to miss."

But Ruthie did not heed him. She hurried into the palace and shouted "Bar the doors; bar the doors! We'll whip them yet. Be a little braver, can't you?" and the pages hastily barred the doors as the Geography Class rolled up the palace steps.

Only for a moment, though, were they safe. The squirrel thinking that defeat was certain, and anxious to stand well with the victors, unbarred the palace doors as soon as the pages had left them, and with a low bow welcomed the Head of the

Class as conqueror and begged the Geography Class to enter. Through the wide doorway rolled the great Globe. The palace was won and the army of No-Man's Land was again defeated. But as for the squirrel, he was pounced upon by the Boy who was Foot of the Class and handed over to Dixie the Ogre, who said :

"Hm ! houf ! next to roast Ruthie with sage and onions, there's nothing better than squirrel pot-pie."

"We are lost !" the Chief of the Gamekeepers said, as they fled into the Throne Room.

"Never give up," Ruthie said cheerfully. "Let us build a fort with the chairs and make a last stand — or — dear me, why didn't we think of it ? Quick, quick — to the Vacation Tower !"

"To the Vacation Tower !" they all echoed, and down the back stairway and through the back door they hurried to the Vacation Tower.

They reached it just in time. For Old Mammy Tipseytoes had seen them and given the alarm, and now up the hill to the Tower rolled the Geography Class, while the Three Wise Men of Gotham, turning their bowl bottomsides up, stood guard over





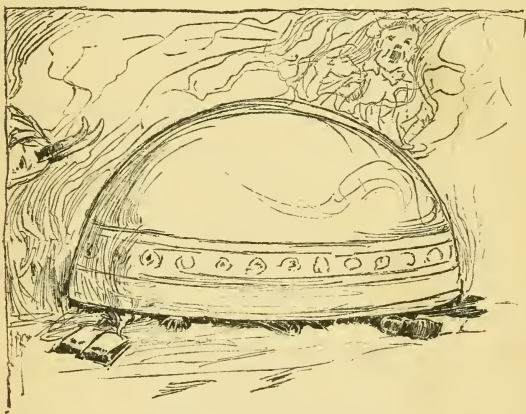
the great host of prisoners which the Geography Class had captured from the army of No-Man's Land.

"Stand firm ; stand firm !" said Ruthie to her little army. "Stand firm and we'll conquer them yet."

It looked desperate but they gathered around her hopefully.

Bang! bang! bang! came the great Globe against the door of the Vacation Tower. Rattle, rattle, rattle! the Geography Class hammered and shook. But the tower stood secure, for it was "all Hunk" as the Chief of the Gamekeepers explained, and Ruthie and her companions were safe. Then she led them to the tip-tip-top and there they thronged the battlements and pelted the besiegers with heated exclamations, weighty words, and bean bags. Still the Geography Class hammered and shook; still they stormed and battered. Then they drew off for consultation. In a moment they were back again and then Latitude mounting on the shoulders of Longitude, one by one the Geography Class climbed up on each other's shoulders until

they reached the top of the Vacation Tower. Highest of all stood the boy who was Head of the Class, and he balanced the great Globe in his hands ready to hurl it at the little army which the Chief of the Gamekeepers had gathered around him on



THE GOAT TO THE RESCUE.

the very top of the Vacation Tower. The last stand was to be made. The Head of the Class swayed the Globe in his hands preparing to discharge it.

The Chief of the Gamekeepers looked around—where was Ruthie? She was nowhere to be seen.

Dear, dear, has she fallen off the Tower? O, no, for just at the right moment the great door of the Tower flew open and Ruthie, rushing out, ran between the long legs of Longitude, and striking him smartly in the bend of his knees, knocked his legs from under him. Down he fell. Down fell fat, round Latitude, with such a thump that he drove nearly all the breath out of poor Longitude. Down, sprawling and tumbling, came every boy in the Geography Class from the Head to the Foot, while the great Globe, thrown by the boy who was Head of the Class, instead of flying against the Chief of the Gamekeepers as was intended, went whirling high into the air and came down with a thump and a bump upon the squirming Geography Class. Dixie the Ogre, Old Mammy Tipseytoes, the Crooked Man and the Tangled Talkers all fled in dismay when they saw the fall of their friends.

Then the goat rushing at the Three Wise Men of Gotham butted them off their bowl. The pages, lifting the bowl, plumped it down over those prostrate Three Wise Men of Gotham and the goat

danced an ecstatic hornpipe on the top, while the squirrel, leaping out of Dixie the Ogre's game bag, led the revived army which chased the enemy from the city. As for Ruthie, she mounted the globe



RUTHIE WAVES HER FLAG IN TRIUMPH

which covered the crushed Geography Class, waved her flag in triumph and called out in her happiest fashion :

“First Class in Natural History stand up ! What are little boys made of ? ”

And the three mice, the two rats, the four kangaroos and the baby elephant answered promptly, in joyous chorus :

Snappers and snails,
And puppy dogs' tails,
And that's what little boys are made of,
Made of.
That's what little boys are made of!

And thus ended the Disastrous Defeat of the
Geography Class who stormed the Vacation Tower!

CHAPTER XII.

HOW RUTHIE HAD TO WALK SPANISH.

THE downcast Geography Class had been taken by the ears and ignominiously conducted through the city gates, warned never to show face in No-Man's Land again, and dismissed with the suggestion that in future they remember that

All work and no play
Make Jack a dull boy.

Ruthie and the Chief of the Gamekeepers had returned in triumphal procession to the palace and now in the great ThroneRoom, gayly decorated with flags and flowers in honor of the occasion the whole court was celebrating the great victory.

Never were the games jollier, never had fun and fancy and frolic run higher. Romping and racing and chasing, laughing and shouting and calling, up

and down and around the Throne Room, Games, Sports and court had skipped and scurried and now in the first pause for rest the Chief of the Game-keepers took his guitar and, accompanying himself with its gentle music he sang softly and sweetly while Ruthie listened with delight and thus he sung :

Dance, O feet, to merry music,
Sweet is childhood's day ;
Sweet the sound of childish laughter
As it trips and ripples after
All the joys of play.

Dance, O feet, to merry music,
Sweet is childhood's day.

Clap, O hands, to merry music,
Sweet is childhood's day ;
Sweet the simple childish pleasures,
Sweeter still the loving treasures
Of child-hearts so gay.

Clap, O hands, to merry music,
Sweet is childhood's day.

Sing, O lips, to merry music,
Sweet is childhood's day ;
Sweet the fancies bright and gleaming,
Sweet the eyes in rapture beaming,

Lighting up life's way.
Sing, O lips, to merry music,
Sweet is childhood's day.

The clear boyish notes of the singer's voice died



away. "O how beautifully you sang that," said Ruthie enthusiastically, and when the rapturous applause which, of course, came from the admiring court, had subsided, the squirrel said — as in all the glory of a full dress suit he strutted before the throne, opera hat under his arm and a lily in his button-hole,

"DANCE, O FEET, TO MERRY MUSIC."

"Did you ever hear me sing?"

"You — why, can you sing?" asked Ruthie.

"Can I sing!" echoed the squirrel with offended dignity. "Can a rooster crow?"

"Is it a conundrum?" Ruthie inquired. "Because if it is I give it up. *Can* a rooster crow? Can a lobster flirt? Can an elephant pack his trunk? Can an ichthyosaurus shave himself? Can —"

"O there, that will do," broke in the squirrel, greatly disgusted at Ruthie's lack of appreciation. "No more cans if you please, they're more in the goat's line than mine. The question is, shall I sing my song?"

"It will be sing-song, any how," said the goat.

"What is it?" asked Ruthie.

"I call it 'The Lay of the Squirrel,'" responded that personage.

"Why, do squirrels lay?" Ruthie inquired innocently.

"Of course they do," said the goat dreamily. "They 'lay low' when there's any danger around."

"Of course they do," said Puss-in-the-Corner. "They 'lay off' whenever there's work to be done."

"Of course they do " said little Jumping Joan.
"They 'lay by' when there are any good things to be distributed."

"I won't sing, I declare I won't," said the squirrel testily.

"O do, do now," said Ruthie coaxingly.
"There, there," she went on, petting and patting him, "'twas too bad to plague him, so it was. He should sing his little lay, so he should."

"Ruthie, do behave yourself," said the squirrel, clearing his throat.

"Of course this lay was composed on the Egg-Shell Sea," ventured little Jumping Joan, musingly.

"Eggs-actly!" said the goat solemnly, and in the midst of a chorus of "there, that's enough!" the squirrel began, accompanying himself, as he sang, on a six-inch xylophone :

Where the green stars rise in the cambric skies,

And the June-bug carolleth low,

I went for a walk

I went for a talk

With the pig,

In a wig,

And a thing-a-ma-jig
 And a calf and a half
 And a bumble-bee big —
 Now how did I come for to go ?

CHORUS: O, O, O !
 How did he come for to go
 With a pig, etc.,

Not for gain nor gold did I walk so bold,
 Though my funds were fearfully low ;
 Not for frolic fair,
 Nor to take the air

With the pig,
 In a wig,
 And a thing-a-ma-jig
 And a calf and a half
 And a bumble-bee big —
 'Then, *how* did I come for to go ?

CHORUS: O, O, O !
 How did he come for to go
 With a pig, etc.

O, list to my lay or I fear you may
 Not fathom my riddle-mero,
 'Twas my day to walk,
 And my day to talk

With the pig,
In a wig,
And a thing-a-ma-jig
And a calf and a half
And a bumble-bee big —
And *that's* how I came for to go!

CHORUS: O, O, O!
That's how he came for to go
With a pig, etc.

As this final chorus rang out right jollily till the Throne Room echoed again with the rollicking air, they all joined hands and went tearing 'round and 'round in a great ring in the dizziest kind of a frolic of "all hands around," with the squirrel dancing the Highland Fling in the centre, and they whirled and twirled so madly that Ruthie began to think that she never could get straight or steady again, and she was really relieved when the Chief of the Gamekeepers cried "Hold, enough!" and said further that as the squirrel had had his little Highland Fling it was no more than right that they should give Ruthie a good game of Hop Scotch.

So the space was marked out on the floor of the



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John W. Smith
1890

RUTHIE AND THE GAMEKEEPER HAVE A GAME OF HOP SCOTCH.

Throne Room, and two beautiful Highland suits were brought for Ruthie and the Chief of the Gamekeepers. Then, while they pitched, and jumped, and twirled, and kicked in a most exciting game of Hop Scotch, the twenty-six pages in tartan plaid and hose and kilt and bonnet danced the Highland Fling most delightfully and two pipers worked their faces vigorously and nearly burst their bagpipes in a swelling and shrieking accompaniment.

But the game was so complicated and exciting, and Ruthie twirled and twisted so frequently that by the time it was over she was turned completely around and things in the Throne Room began to grow very dizzy and mixed. People changed places so rapidly that they soon changed faces as rapidly and just as Ruthie was about to address one person, behold, it was not that person at all, but some one altogether different. Little Jumping Joan was not little Jumping Joan, but Puss-in-the-Corner, and not Puss-in-the-Corner, but the goat, and not the goat, but the dining table. The Chief of the Gamekeepers floated mistily away and in his place appeared Bachelor Blue who changed as

quickly to the Four-Horned Lady always Four-Horned, and then to the Crooked Man and then to Old Mammy Tipseytoes. Ruthie was perplexed. She held her head firmly with both hands to prevent herself from turning into some one else, and



THE LITTLE JUMPING JOAN CAT FIDDLED.

as she did so there came another transformation. The benign and sedate face of her old friend, the goat, floated away and reappeared as the smiling moon hanging in place of the great chandelier. The Chief of the Gamekeepers was a frisky and frolic-

some cow, and little Jumping Joan became a cherry-colored cat with a real Cremona fiddle. The golden throne turned into a grinning little dog, and all the dishes on the table began to clatter and dance. The spoons, especially, grew very affectionate and flirted desperately with the butter dishes and the carving knife, while the fat silver ladle in the soup tureen conducted herself in what Ruthie considered "a most un-ladle-like-manner." Then there was a great commotion, a fizzing, and a popping, and a leaping ; the little Jumping Joan cat fiddled and fiddled and fiddled while the dinner service sang at the highest pitch :

Hey, diddle, diddle ;
 The Cat and the Fiddle,
 The Cow jumped over the Moon,
 The little Dog laughed
 To see such sport
 And the Dish ran away with the Spoon.

Yes, it was terribly mixed and Ruthie felt that she was fast being drawn into the excitement and fully expected to find herself before long hanging on the

cow's horn, or acting as the fiddle, or the spoon, or the dog's laugh for all she knew, when she was horrified to see coming straight towards her out of all this confusion her old enemy "the Knight out of Spain" whom she supposed dead and buried long ago. But there he came striding across the Throne Room. He wore over his gleaming armor a great red poncho and on his head a green sombrero with a long blue feather. And as he came towards her he sang,

I'm a Knight out of Spain,
Rushing here with might and main,
Rushing here with main and might,
To give Miss Ruthie a terrible fright.

Then he said suddenly, "What are you doing here?"

"Please, sir," said Ruthie quite humbly, "I was just going to Hop Scotch."

"Hop Scotch, Hop Scotch, hey!" he said gruffly. "Well — can you Run French? Can you Skip Russian? Can you Dance Chinese? Can you Jump Ojibbaway? Can you," this he said in a terrible voice, "can you Walk Spanish?"

“Why, no sir, I think not,” said Ruthie, greatly alarmed.

“Well, then, you must,” he said; “well, then, you shall,” he added,
“for you know —

You may tell of your
Waltzes and Polkas,
Your Galops, your Trois-
temps, and Hops,
You may sing of your
Reels and Mazourkas,
But there all your elo-
quence stops.

Tho’ the German with
grace you may handle,
And excel in the Polka,
called Danish,
Yet not one of them all
holds a candle
To the way that I’ll make
you —Walk Spanish!



THE KNIGHT OUT OF SPAIN REAP-
PEARED.

Then, while all the Games of No-Man’s Land were whirling and whizzing and leaping about the room, till Ruthie could not distinguish one from the

other, while the squirrel scudded away as fast as his legs could carry him, and the goat with the face of the moon danced with three of his four legs on the tomato can and waved the fourth leg in frantic good-by, while all was confusion, and perplexity, and riot in Ruthie's brain, and no one was at all distinct except this terrible Knight out of Spain, Ruthie felt him seize the back of her pretty lace neck-ruffle with one hand and a handful of her dress in the other, and as he shouted,

Ha-ha,

Ha-ha ;

So all visions vanish

For sooner or later

We all Walk Spanish,

he walked her before him out of the confusion of the Throne Room and down the palace stairs, across the square of the Mulberry Bush and through the city gates to the borders of the Egg-Shell Sea, where far above her rose the steep cliffs of the Jumping-off Place. Then he paused and sang,

Ho, ho, ho ! Ha, ha, ha !

Over you go — fast and far



RUTHIE LEANS ON THE ARM OF THE JOLLY POLICEMAN.



Over you go, now, Ruthie, vanish !

O, you go ! so you go ! — Walking Spanish !

With that Ruthie felt herself jumped away up, up, and then felt herself dropping down, down, down, till she knew that she would land with such a bump that she would be shaken all to pieces. So she tried to save herself from too severe a shock, and, bracing herself against the air, she pushed herself upward with a little spring, gave a little shriek and landed, safe and sound — in the arms of the jolly policeman who was shaking her gently as she lay there all curled up in one corner of the horse-car where she had fallen asleep.

“ Well, well,” said the jolly policeman, “ so you’re awake at last ? Is your name Ruthie ? ”

“ Yes, sir, I think so,” said Ruthie, not yet fully awake. “ O, where am I ? Are you the goat ? ”

“ Am I the goat ? Well, that’s a good one. Ha, ha, ha ; ho, ho, ho ! ” laughed the jolly policeman. “ Hey, it’s all right,” he called out, poking his head through the car-window, “ here she is ! ”

Ruthie heard a chorus of “ ohs ” and then a rush, and through the car-door came mamma all tears and

triumph, and papa all gray and glad, and Paul and Jennie all wonder and worry, and even Sarah the



THROUGH THE CAR DOOR CAME MAMMA.

nurse-girl, all wretchedness and ruffles, and they pounced upon her with "O, Ruthie!" and they hugged her with "O, Ruthie!" and they kissed her and cried over her with "O, Ruthie!" until Ruthie began to think it was part of her dream in some sort of a game. And then while they all questioned, in walked the conductor, and said, "Hallo; what's this? Is this the little girl that was lost?"

"Well, yes, I reckon it is," said the jolly policeman ; "and I've got a great mind to take you in for being so careless. How did you come to let this little girl go to sleep in your car ? Why didn't you wake her up when you pulled into the car-stables ? I ought to take your number and report you. Here we've been hunting all over town for her."

"Is that so ?" said the hot and sleepy conductor. "Well, I s'pose it was my fault, but you see it was so hot and I was so fearfully sleepy, and she was such a little mite, all curled up in that dark corner, that I must have overlooked her entirely. I'm awful sorry," he continued, contritely, "but goodness, what can you expect of a fellow when he's run down into a regular grease-spot from the heat and feels as slimpsey as a last week's banana-skin ? Blame the thermometer, but don't blame me."

So they forgave him, and as Ruthie was, by this time, fully awake and "unstiffened," as she expressed it, she began to realize her position and the adventure that had befallen her. She cried a little for fright and a little more because of the anxiety she had caused her mamma and papa, and then, in

the centre of a triumphal procession, she passed out of the horse-car in which she had taken a good four hours' nap and walked dreamily home through the warm summer evening. But as she passed through the car door she gave one last look at the pasteboard squirrel in his advertising panel. He was as still as a tumbler of condensed milk — without life or motion of any kind and yet, to this day, Ruthie declares that when she looked at him she is "positively certain" that that squirrel actually winked at her.

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